

DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

OF

and 2a
I R E L A N D,

ON FRIDAY THE 14TH OF FEBRUARY, 1800,

ON THE

S U B J E C T

OF A

LEGISLATIVE UNION

WITH

G R E A T B R I T A I N.

CONTAINING THE

SPEECHES OF THE RIGHT HON. THE SPEAKER, MESSRS. PONSONBY, LORD
CASTLEREAGH, EGAN, SMITH, SAURIN, JOHNSON, O'DONNELL,
BURROWES, THE RIGHT HON. THE CHANCELLOR OF THE
EXCHEQUER,

AND THE REPLY OF

H E N R Y G R A T T A N, E S Q.

ALSO THE

PETITIONS FROM THE COUNTY OF CARLOW, COUNTY OF
THE TOWN OF CARRICKFERGUS, MERCHANTS, TRADERS,
&c. OF THE TOWN OF NEWRY, COUNTY OF DOWN, KING'S
COUNTY, COUNTY OF LEITRIM, COUNTY OF WEST-
MEATH, COUNTY OF CLARE, BOROUGH OF DOWNPA-
TRICK, FREEHOLDERS AND INHABITANTS OF PORTAR-
LINGTON, AND COUNTIES OF LOUTH AND CORK.

D U B L I N:

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D E B A T E S.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH, 1800.

THE Right Hon. the SPEAKER having taken the chair, several members were sworn in, and took their seats accordingly.

A petition of the freeholders of the county of *Carlow*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the freeholders of the county of *Carlow* approach the House with the most sincere assurances of their inviolable attachment to that connexion which so happily subsists between his Majesty's realms of Great Britain and Ireland, according to the settlement of 1782, and with the most anxious desire, as far as in them lies, to maintain it inviolate for ever; that they have observed with the deepest affliction, the revival of the measure of a Legislative Union, so lately rejected by the uninfluenced voice of the House, which, by depriving them of a resident Parliament, would remove the only real or practicable security for their properties, their liberties, or their lives; to that Parliament, supported, as the petitioners trust it ever will deserve to be, by the hearts of the People, they are indebted for their independence, and for its necessary consequence, their late rapid increase in commerce, industry, and comfort; to that Parliament, and to it alone, can the petitioners look for permanence to the connexion with Great Britain, the very soul and essence of their existence as a free and happy people, and they therefore on the part of themselves and their fellow subjects, with deference, demand from the justice of the House the preservation of their rights and liberties, and the blessings of a free and independent Parliament, resident amongst them.

A petition of the electors of the county of the town of *Carrickfergus*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners beg leave to express their firm attachment to the person of the King, and the principles of the Constitution; with the deepest regret the petitioners learn that the measure of an incorporate Union of Ireland with Great Britain is again to be brought before the consideration of Parliament, a measure which was condemned and rejected in the last session; that petitioners are of opinion that such a measure is fraught with the most alarming consequences, annihilating their existence as a nation, tending to endanger the present connexion between the two countries, and subjecting their liberties and properties to the uncontrolled disposal of a Parliament in which they cannot be adequately

quately represented, and which, from its remoteness, could be little acquainted with their local conditions and interests, or hear few of their complaints; content with the Constitution as finally established in 1782, and abhorrent to a speculative innovation, irrevocable if once admitted, the petitioners humbly pray and confide that Parliament will maintain that Constitution inviolate, to preserve which, the Members of the House were elected, and that the Members will, at the expiration of their trust, restore it to their constituents unimpaired, that it may be transmitted pure and unsullied to the latest posterity.

A petition of the merchants, traders, gentlemen, freeholders, and inhabitants of the town of *Newry*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners are firmly and unalterably attached to the Royal Person and Family of his most gracious Majesty, and the principles of the Constitution; that the petitioners beg leave to express their most heartfelt concern at finding the measure of a Legislative Union between this kingdom and Great Britain which has already been rejected by the uninfluenced sense of the House, is again to be brought before the House for further consideration; that in consequence of the Constitution of the kingdom having been happily and finally settled in the year 1782, through the parental care of his Majesty, the liberality of the British Parliament, and the virtue of the Irish Parliament, this nation has increased and is increasing in wealth, prosperity, and commerce, to a degree unexampled in the records of history; that the petitioners are unalterably attached to that Constitution and the blessings they enjoy under it, and therefore will never consent to exchange those blessings for so alarming and desperate a measure as that of totally, irrevocably, and for ever annihilating the Parliament and Constitution of Ireland, an experiment of such monstrous magnitude as to involve in it the existence of Ireland as a nation, the petitioners' property and their liberties, wholly extinguishing the one, and placing the others under the controul of a legislature in which the proposed number of their representation are so unequal as five hundred to one hundred; an experiment, that if once tried, can never be recalled, though they should be lost in its ruins; content, therefore, with the blessings they enjoy, the petitioners pray the House to leave them in possession of them, and to restore to them unimpaired, at the expiration of this Parliament, that Constitution which the members of the House were elected to preserve, to the end that the petitioners may transmit it to their posterity.

A petition of the noblemen, gentlemen, clergy, and freeholders of the county of *Down*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners view with the most dutiful gratitude the parental attention of their ever gracious Sovereign in recommending to his Parliament of this kingdom the adoption of a measure to cement the closer connexion and friendship of the two countries, which, if completed, must strengthen the sinews of the empire; and the petitioners hope their Parliament may think fit to receive and duly discuss the proposed plan

plan so graciously recommended, and trust to the wisdom, discretion and integrity of their Parliament to adopt and promote the system as far as may appear consistent with the dignity of Ireland, and as it may tend to ensure the peace and prosperity of this country.

A petition of the freeholders of the *King's County*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners, sincerely attached as they are to his Majesty's sacred person and family, and to the present connexion of this kingdom with Great Britain, must entertain the most lively alarm at the approach of any measure which could weaken that attachment and endanger that connexion; that sensible of the excellency of the Constitution of this country they most ardently wish to have it maintained on the independent principles upon which it was founded in the year 1782; that it is necessary to the welfare of the people that their Parliament should be resident in the kingdom, in order to have a common interest with the nation, and should be solely composed of Irish Senators, over whom the Irish People could have a constitutional and effectual influence; that the petitioners, after the most solemn and mature deliberation, are convinced that the measure of a Legislative Union with Great Britain, would be radically destructive of the constitutional independence, the commercial interests, and the general prosperity of this kingdom, and that by destroying their liberty and obliterating their name, would sink them at once into impotency and degradation; that the experience of the eighteen years which have elapsed since petitioners obtained a free trade and free constitution, furnish them with numerous and unequivocal proofs of the value of these national blessings, and convinces the petitioners that from them alone have flowed that wealth and other resources by which they have been enabled to contribute to the multiplying expences of the contest in which the petitioners are involved, and thus prove their gratitude to their Prince and anxiety for the safety and honour of the empire; that the petitioners, with these sentiments deeply engraven on their hearts, are astonished at the design of the minister to deprive them of their Constitution, and to take from this ancient, populous, and flourishing island its attributes as a kingdom, its strongest bonds of connexion with Great Britain, and its only solid security for the prosperity which it now enjoys; and therefore praying the House to avert these formidable evils and to restore confidence to the people of Ireland, by vindicating their rights by their decision on this important question.

A petition of the freeholders of the county of *Leitrim*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that at this awful and alarming moment the petitioners feel themselves called upon to declare their opinion, that they consider a Legislative Union with Great Britain to be a dangerous innovation, fraught with ruin to the constitutional independence, commercial interests, and general prosperity of the kingdom; that this measure, by depriving petitioners of a resident and protecting Legislature, under which this country has hitherto prospered beyond example, by encreasing the number of absentees, and

the consequent drain of the wealth of this kingdom, must augment the discontents of the kingdom, and thereby endanger the connection between Great Britain and Ireland, which petitioners are determined to support with their lives and fortunes; that petitioners rely therefore with the most unshaken confidence on the wisdom and justice of the House, that it will maintain unimpaired to them and their posterity that sacred Constitution which is their birth-right, which has been the source of every blessing to this island, and the enjoyment of which petitioners deem to be inseparable from their existence as a free people.

A petition of the gentlemen, clergy, freeholders and landholders of the county of *Westmeath*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the kingdom has risen within the last seventeen years with a rapidity unexampled in the annals of mankind from a situation of poverty and distress to its present high state of prosperity; that the real and progressive improvement of our country is, under Providence, to be ascribed to that free and independent Constitution so happily acquired in 1782; that the petitioners, feeling from experience the Constitution of 1782 to be the surest guardian of the interests of this country and of its connexion with Great Britain, to which they are most warmly attached, they humbly entreat the firm and unremitted exertions of the House to preserve it unaltered and unimpaired.

A petition of the freeholders and inhabitants of the county of *Clare*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that at this awful and alarming moment they cannot cease to expect from the representatives of the people in parliament the preservation of those rights with which they have been entrusted by the nation; that they consider the unexampled prosperity of Ireland as solely derived from her happy connexion with Great Britain, as best secured by the constitution established in 1782, and that the one may be endangered and the other dissolved by a Legislative Union, which they feel to be an experiment subversive of that constitution by which alone both can be preserved for ever; that they rely with the most unshaken confidence on the wisdom and justice of the House that it will maintain unimpaired to them and to their posterity that sacred Constitution which is their birth-right, which has been the source of every blessing to this island, and the enjoyment of which they deem to be inseparable from their existence as a free people.

A petition of the merchants, traders, gentlemen, freeholders and inhabitants of the borough of *Downpatrick*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners are firmly attached to the person and family of their most gracious Sovereign and the principles of their most happy Constitution; that the petitioners beg permission to express their great concern at finding the measure of a Legislative Union between this kingdom and Great Britain, which has been already rejected by the uninfluenced sense of the House, is again

to be brought before it for its further consideration, the petitioners take the liberty of stating, that in consequence of the Constitution of this kingdom having been finally settled in the year 1782, through the parental care of their beloved Sovereign, the liberality of the British parliament and the virtue of this nation, has encreased and is continuing to encrease in wealth, prosperity and commerce; the petitioners are unalterably attached to that Constitution and the blessings which they enjoy under it, and therefore will never consent to exchange those blessings for so alarming and desperate a measure as that of totally and for ever irrevocably annihilating their parliament and Constitution; therefore, content with the blessings they enjoy, praying the House to leave them in possession of them, and permit them to transmit unimpaired that Constitution to their latest posterity.

A petition of the freeholders and inhabitants of the town and vicinity of *Portarlington*, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners, sincerely attached as they are to his Majesty's sacred person and family, and to the present free and honorable connexion of this kingdom with Great Britain, must entertain the most lively alarm at the approach of any measure which tended to weaken that attachment and endanger that connexion; that the petitioners are convinced that the measure of a Legislative Union of this kingdom with Great Britain will be destructive of the constitutional independence and general prosperity of Ireland; that the petitioners, during the late horrid and unnatural rebellion and foreign invasion, have evinced the most unshaken loyalty and attachment to his Majesty's person, crown, and dignity, and to the Constitution of this kingdom, and for the maintenance of which they pledge themselves in the most solemn manner against the attempts of foreign and domestic enemies; and therefore praying that the House will avert this formidable evil and restore confidence to the people of Ireland by resisting in their legislative capacity this abominable measure of Union.

A petition of the freeholders of the county of *Louth*, convened by public notice from the high sheriff, and of the landholders of said county, whose names are thereunto subscribed, was presented to the House and read; setting forth, that the petitioners did hope that after the measure of a Legislative Union had been rejected by the wisdom and spirit of the House in the last session, this kingdom would not have been agitated by the revival of it, and they bear with surprise and concern, that his Majesty's ministers not only propose to bring it forward again, but that they have had recourse to influence unknown to the Constitution, and unpractised in any former period, to carry it into effect; that the petitioners are firmly and unalterably attached to the British Empire, and consider this measure as tending to injure the whole of it, but more particularly Ireland, by risking an alteration in the existing connexion between the two kingdoms, to the preservation of which our present Constitution has not only proved sufficient, but has since its confirmation

tion in 1782 encreased the happiness, the resources, and the prosperity of this country beyond any example in history during a similar length of time; that the sufficiency of the Constitution, so confirmed, to maintain that connexion, has been proved, by its having overpowered a most dangerous and deep laid conspiracy to separate us from Great Britain, by its having crushed an alarming rebellion which was the consequence of that conspiracy, and by its having preserved the connexion unimpaired through all the dangers of that rebellion, attended with three invasions of the common enemy, and has preserved it so firmly, that nothing but the rash and ill-advised endeavours of ministers to carry this measure against the sense of the nation (if they were fatally to prevail) could endanger its perpetual continuance; that the Constitution so confirmed has not only proved sufficient to maintain, but has encreased the bonds of that connexion; for although various jealousies and difficulties existed between the kingdoms from time to time previous to 1782, the petitioners have had none since that happy period, and the two nations have ever since proceeded towards each other with mutual acts of friendship and conciliation, and added reciprocal good wishes and mutual interests to strengthen its continuance; that the petitioners therefore feel a free and independent Parliament resident in Ireland to be not only so absolutely essential to that connexion as to be the only means of preserving it, but they deem it their only security for every blessing of Constitution, trade, wealth, happiness and prosperity, which they do or can enjoy, and in the words of the House in 1782—"we claim it as our birth-right," and humbly expect and implore from this House its preservation; that the petitioners have not heard of any evil or inconvenience attending their present situation, nor of any benefit, however remote or speculative, even promised from the measure, which can justify so hazardous a change; that the miseries of the present awful times in a great part of Europe justify their abhorrence of any innovation on the present happy Constitution, much more one from which there would be no retreat, no redress, if it should fatally prove, as they are satisfied it would, subversive of every blessing they enjoy; that if the most devoted loyalty to the best of Sovereigns that ever ruled the empire, if this unalterable attachment to a perpetual connexion with Great Britain, and if their own prosperity, which is inseparable from that connexion, were not sufficient to make them deprecate the measure, they should add this further motive for the House to reject it, that this kingdom is too large, too populous, and too thriving, to admit the possibility of its legislation being carried on in another country, where its local interests cannot be understood, its wishes heard, or its wants examined with due promptitude and efficacy, and the necessary attendance on which must so add to the present impoverishing drain of absentees, as to reduce its prosperity, and endanger its future tranquillity; and therefore praying themselves to the consideration of the House, and praying relief.

We whose names are hereunto subscribed, conceive it necessary thus publicly to declare our sentiments on the subject of a Legislative

tive Union; and concurrent with the sense of the nation, to give our decided disapprobation to the renewal of that measure already condemned by the House of Commons.

We will yield to none in our affection for our King, and attachment to our Constitution—we desire to preserve British connexion, and therefore we desire to preserve our independence.

Since the glorious period of 1782, when the independence of our Constitution was finally established, we have seen this kingdom advancing in a manner almost unexampled in the history of nations; as its commerce and agriculture, its arts and manufactures have extended and improved; its resources and revenues have increased; and in proportion to its improvement has this kingdom become a more effectual support to the strength of the empire at large.

Connected with Great Britain in the strictest bonds of interest and affection, it is our most ardent wish to avoid a measure which we cannot now doubt, would ultimately tend to endanger that connexion which it should be the policy of both nations to preserve, and their mutual interest to render secure and permanent.

Having thus, in the face of our country and of Europe, declared our opinions, we cannot be recorded among the abettors of that fatal policy, who still continue to struggle against the collected mind of Ireland; whose pertinacity will not allow them to recede, and whose perseverance will leave nothing to our posterity but the inheritance of perpetuated strife, protracted tumult, and interminable calamity.

The House having resolved itself into a committee, Mr. ANNESLEY in the Chair.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER.—Sir, I should think it an abuse of the time of the Committee, if I entered into the discussion, as if this was an entirely new question, and had come before the House now for the first time, I shall therefore not enter into that wide range of argument which I should deem necessary under other circumstances. The principle of this measure has been very ably investigated in a publication by a gentleman whom I saw just now, who has shown in the clearest manner the beneficial effects that must result from it. The noble Lord beside me, stated the whole subject with so much ability and precision, in bringing it before the public, that I should be much to blame if I were to follow them through the general principle, or, if upon this particular question I was to enter into any minute detail—Prescribing this rule to myself, and at present thinking it would be rather inconsistent than of service to adopt a contrary conduct. The objections which have been made to this measure class themselves in a general way under three heads, they apply to constitutional, to financial, and to commercial points.

It has been stated that this measure is one, not founded in any necessity, nor induced by any imperfection in the constitution of 1782, but suggested to the mind of the British Minister by a desire

to impose injurious restrictions upon the people of this country. This objection is pregnant with this assertion, that the constitution of 1782 does not contain any imperfections which render this measure necessary, and that there exist no other causes which ought to have originated it. I will, therefore, recall to the recollection of the Committee, some circumstances which I think will fairly suggest other causes for this measure besides the imperfection of the constitution of 1782. And then it will be for the Committee to consider whether these assertions are well-founded. With respect to the other causes which originated the measure, they may be generally stated to consist in the religious dissensions, in the national contentions, and in the political convulsions which have agitated this country for a considerable time. And I think it will appear that I have not only justified the minister in bringing forward this measure, but that he would have neglected his duty, and have been impeachable if he had not. The agitations which have harassed this country have been of the different descriptions I have already mentioned. Religious contentions; national contentions between England and Ireland; and these political convulsions of which we have all been witnesses, considering them in different points of view, they have divided themselves into three periods. The religious dissensions existed up to the time when the Catholics were restored to their rights. From that period much time has been occupied by the national contentions between England and Ireland; viz. from the American war to the commencement of the French Revolution. From that period to the present our agitations have arisen from political convulsions among ourselves. The religious dissensions subsisted from very remote antiquity down to the time when their rights were restored. After the statements which have been made of the historical transactions upon this subject it would be unnecessary for me to enter into any detail. I shall therefore only shortly recall the recollection of the Committee to these transactions in order that they may know the situation of the country upon this subject when the business was brought forward.

We find the country divided into two great religious parties, the Protestants and the Catholics.—We find the Protestants in possession of political power and of the government of the country, and the Catholics much exceeding the Protestants in number and what has been emphatically called physical force. We find that the whole property of the country had been confiscated in various rebellions, and the property of which the Catholics were thus divested were given to the Protestants. We find that during the period of the severe Catholic Code of Laws, one more severe than ever existed, their complaints never ceased: they never ceased applying for redress at proper periods, first for their property, and then for their civil and political rights. We find that at length under the benign influence of his present Majesty, that Code was relaxed, they were restored to their civil rights, and with some exceptions, they were put upon a footing with the Protestant people of Ireland. We find that when they were restored to their civil, they

they put in a claim for what they considered as their political rights. This claim they brought forward in the most distinct manner, and it was publicly registered. On the other hand the Protestants of the country did, in as distinct a manner decline to comply with it, and we find this refusal recorded. The Catholics still persisted in their claim: I wish to be understood as not making any charge against them; I am stating facts, not arguing upon motive. I state the situation in which they stand. They are now committed upon this great subject—claim, on the one hand, and refusal on the other. This is the result of the historical facts, and this is the situation in which the country now stands. While the Catholics were in a state of agitation I will not say that they did recal the notion of confiscated property—I will not say that they advanced the idea of the resumption of property if they were restored. But this I will state because every man knows it, that some of their friends were industrious enough upon different occasions to introduce that subject. This certainly did produce very considerable apprehensions in the minds of timid Protestants, and did cause them to be more disinclined to the claim which was made by the Catholics. The question was thus left at issue, and it is not easy to conceive how it could be brought to a decision without convulsing the country. If gentlemen will not deny this statement, they cannot deny that there must remain a ground of future dissensions and jealousies, and I wish to ask them if they are able to point out the means by which they can be disposed of, in order to put an end to the agitations of the country upon this subject. May I apply to some gentlemen opposite to me, and ask them, if they can suggest any means by which this question can be disposed of. May I ask a right hon. gentleman (the Speaker) if he can state any means which can, in his opinion, put a stop to it, will he inform the House and the nation how it can be effected? I am sure every man will listen to him with attention and respect. Will he tell us what measures can be adopted by which the Protestants will be contented and the Catholics satisfied? Will he assure the House, that when he has stated these means, that the Protestants will accede to them, and that the Catholics will trust their interests in his hands? Has he been authorized by them to bring this business to a decision? If he is consistent with himself, I think he will not consent to grant their claims. I am not now arguing what ought to be granted, but what would probably be his advice, if he were now to give it. Let me ask the hon. gentleman next to him the same question; I assure his advice would be directly opposite to that of the right hon. gentleman, so that we find the two gentlemen differing widely in the remedies they would prescribe, yet both concurring in opposing the only measure that can effectually succeed. In saying this I wish not to give any opinion upon the Catholic claim; it is not now the question before the House, but I state this, that upon such a question between two great parties, some decision ought to take place. If the Minister of England has seen these circumstances in the situation of the country, and thought that the animosity of

the parties would continue, would he not be much to blame if he thought there was a possibility of finding out any means which could be adopted with the approbation of the country, would he not, I say, if he had neglected to prepare them have deserted his duty and sinned both against God and man? If he had neglected the only means in his power to put an end to the dissensions of four millions of people, he would have been a base man and have acted with treachery both to the King and the People.—I now desire to ask whether there is not to be found in this subject one of the originating causes of the measure now before the House.—I have stated another subject of disquiet in this country which prevailed from the period of the American war to the French revolution. At the time when the American war broke out there were considerable discussions upon almost every constitutional point. In consequence of these discussions Ireland turned her attention to American politics: she considered her then situation as owing to the narrow policy of Great Britain, and she did determine to make an effort to retrieve her condition. In consequence of this determination a resolution was sent over to Great Britain, in which Ireland asserted her right to a free trade. Her desire was heard by England, a free trade was granted, the nation for a time was contented, and the agitation passed away. But this country is never to be without its agitations whether from religious or other causes. There is a temper in this country which renders it more prone to agitation, and more quickly and easily affected, and that to a degree of intemperance than any other country. This tranquillity was of short duration: the next source of disquiet was an effort for a free Constitution. It was demanded of Great Britain, and was with equal grace conceded. Thus Great Britain at once abandoned the narrow policy by which she had been actuated, and that authority over Ireland which she had assumed, and Ireland was again tranquil. This took place in 1782; but in 1783 a new subject of agitation arose about the Protecting Duties, which produced considerable discussion in Parliament. It was not long however, before a new question arose, I mean the Commercial Propositions between Great Britain and this country, which were brought forward in 1785.—After the discussion of these, which produced a great ferment both in England and Ireland, the question of the Regency occurred, which unfortunate event threw this country into a new species of confusion. There arose a degree of Parliamentary agitation, more violent than we had ever known in this country; but by his Majesty's happy recovery quiet was again restored. Thus we find, that during these subjects of agitation arose in such a manner, that this country was never at rest for any considerable time, so as to enable her to pursue her prosperity. In these questions of contention between the two countries, the Parliament of Ireland exercised what was her unquestionable right, but they shewed that the connexion between England and Ireland was not defended by the Constitution of this country, but that it was open to dissolution. It appeared also, that in questions of War and Peace we might exercise that discretion

cretion which we had exercised upon the question of the Regency. These circumstances caused great apprehension with respect to the situation of this country as connected with the Imperial Constitution. They shewed that the connexion was not secured, and consequently that the empire was exposed to considerable danger. In this may be found another cause of the Union now proposed: and until gentlemen can shew that the connexion is not in danger, it cannot be denied that some measures ought to be taken to secure it.

From the period of the French revolution, a new system took place in this country, which, by a regular progress, advanced to convulsion and rebellion. In 1791, the conspiracy of the United Irishmen took place; in 1793, it appears by our Statute Books, that that conspiracy had gained many friends in this country—your Statute Books will shew you what was your situation in 1793, you passed a Convention Bill to prevent them from arrogating to themselves the functions, and superceding the authority of Parliament: these Statutes will shew you the distractions of the country and will prove the necessity of the adoption of some vigorous remedy. The French principles took effect in Ireland—principles, calculated for the destruction of religion, of social order, and of every thing that ought to be dear to man. They were digested into French philosophy, founded upon French folly and French wickedness; they were calculated to revolutionize the public mind; first in religion and politics, and then in morality; to subvert that religion, which is the correction of the high and the protection of the low in society; to introduce that system of horrid depravity which had placed a prostitute as an object of adoration upon the Altar of God; to teach the child to forget his duty to his parent; to teach the servant to destroy his master; they tended to violate every sanctuary of society; to create in the minds of men a desire of change, and to induce them to overturn every foundation upon which civil society rested.

The French, by their famous decree of November 1792, avowed themselves the protectors of rebels in every state. The consequence of these principles gaining ground in this country were first convulsions, and ultimately rebellion. It is very material to consider to what extent they had proceeded; it is very material, because in this state of things with respect to political affairs, we find one of the causes of the measure now under our consideration. These principles were supported by men of considerable rank and abilities in this country. I am sorry to say they had an apparent support from the speeches of gentlemen in this House, which gave a kind of countenance and encouragement to the traitors, whose only aim was to subvert the Constitution of the country. I am sure that these speeches, and publications of the same kind, have tended to inflame the people to make them discontented, and to render it probable that if they had attempted an invasion, it would have been attended with consequences perhaps fatal to the kingdom, and destructive to the prosperity of the empire. An invasion was attempted, encouraged as it were, by these speeches and these publications;

I do not charge them as traitors, but I say that if they were inclined to encourage treason, they would hold precisely the conduct which they did. I cannot pass this part of the subject lightly, every man in Ireland who is a traitor is against the Union. (Several Members called out no! no!) Gentleman say no, I cannot be understood to say that all who oppose the Union are traitors, but I mean that there is not a traitor, not a conspirator, not an United Irishman in the country, who is not against the Union. An opposition to this measure has been the great and professed object of those unexecuted traitors who have been sent out of the country, of those unarraigned traitors who have been suffered to remain in it.

I must take the liberty to read as part of my speech, some extracts from a publication professing to state the sentiments of the author, and those with whom he acted. I hold in my hand this manifesto to the People of Dublin, I read it because it cannot be contradicted, that it does profess to state the principles of the gentleman who wrote it, and of those with whom he acted, and as they have not disavowed it, it may be fairly considered as stating their sentiments and conduct. I read it, not against him, but as descriptive of the opinions of those with whom he acted. The general tendency of it will be found to degrade Parliament, and to lead the country into that situation which unfortunately followed. It begins with stating that the object of Government was to render "The King in Parliament every thing, and the People nothing." It then proceeded to state, as remedies for the evils which were stated, to oppress the country, Catholic Emancipation and Parliamentary Reform. You recollect, that you appointed a Committee, and that it appeared from some traitors who were examined, that they considered Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation merely as a feather, that they were brought forward only as pretexts, and that it was of no importance whether they were granted or not. It then goes on to state,

"There may be a conspiracy, there may be republicanism, there may be a spirit of plunder mixing in the public cause, and let no man persuade you that it is not the cause of liberty on the one side and tyranny on the other."

I could go on and read extracts of a similar nature. Here we may find another cause of this measure, when gentlemen of great abilities preach the doctrines of rebellion, and call it liberty; and when we find that a rebellion did follow, which destroyed the principles and endangered the existence of Government.

But it is said that the Constitution of 1782, is sufficient to redress all those evils. Let me ask what is the Constitution of 1782? By the British Constitution the British Legislature consists of three estates, the King, Lords and Commons; in them is vested the Legislative and the Sovereign Power. Their functions however, are of a double description: besides the Legislative they have other powers equally constitutional, necessary and indispensable. In the Crown is vested the Executive, in the Lords the Judicial, and in the Commons the Inquisitorial Power. These powers are as necessary as the

the Legislative, and give efficacy to the Constitution. The Constitution, as far as it relates to Legislation, would be an inert motionless body, if it was not for the other powers, the executive to put it in motion, and the others to controul and restrain the executive, which would otherwise destroy them. Without all these, you cannot have a British Constitution. It cannot work; you cannot have the benefit of it, if you have not these powers so divided. But how do you stand with regard to the Legislature? You have three branches, one of which, namely, the Crown, is resident in another country, subject to the influence of a British Minister, and the controul of a British Parliament; you cannot therefore have the benefit of the British Constitution, as that portion of your Legislature which is in England is subject to the controul of a British Parliament. But again with respect to the operative functions of the Executive, and the inquisitorial powers of Parliament—our Executive is vested in the Crown, and acts under the controul of the British Parliament; your Executive therefore is not the same, inasmuch as it is subject to that controul. With regard to your inquisitorial power, where is it? you are completely divested of it; you have not that controul which will preserve to you the benefits of the British Constitution. In what manner can it be said that you have any portion of the inquisitorial power? You have what has been called a fugacious responsibility. You have, however, a species of controul, sometimes exercised by the Parliament, which is not unconstitutional, but something very like it. Your two Houses of Parliament are similar to those in England; you may therefore if you please refuse your assent to any measure proposed. This plan has often been resorted to; the grant of supplies, and the redress of grievances, may be made to go hand in hand. But how does this operate if the executive power is not subject to any other controul, it is not the British Constitution if the executive had nothing to ask, for it would be of no avail, but if he had it would be effectual. But how does this stand? You have used it whenever you had an object to carry—you have said, let us vote a short money bill, a short mutiny bill, because you had no other means of controul. If you arm yourselves thus for warfare with this exercise of legislative controul, when would you use it? Certainly when you could use it with effect, that is when the country is in war, when the King comes for supply, and when your assistance is of great importance to the empire. You are deprived of your constitutional controul, and you are obliged instead of it to resort to that which you cannot use without the greatest risk to the empire. This very circumstance proves that your executive is under the controul of the British Parliament. In whatever way you consider it, it appears entirely incompetent for promoting the national advantages of this kingdom, and for the support of the connexion between the two countries, which is so necessary for the welfare of both.

These are the causes in which this measure originated, and which rendered it necessary in order to prevent separation. You are invited by this Union, not only to share in the British Constitution, but

but to participate in the prosperity of Great Britain. Instead of a Union of Monarchies, you are invited to a Union of the Sovereignities of the two countries. When the Act of Annexation passed, the English Parliament legislated for Ireland; therefore there was no occasion to unite the legislatures, there was no necessity for a Union until you threw off the power of the British Parliament: you are invited to do what? To restore yourselves to the sovereignty of your country, to participate not only the sovereignty of Ireland but of England, and of the empire; you are going to extend your power, to partake of the councils which regulate the British empire and all its dependencies; and this is called the degradation of Ireland. But it is said that the number of members you are to send over to the British Parliament will not be sufficient to preserve your influence; yet it is evident from the statement made upon this subject by the noble Lord beside me, that the numbers we are to return are proportioned to our relative importance in the empire. Gentlemen, however, contend, that five hundred and fifty-eight members must out-number one hundred; but this argument is only used because they will not give an idea of distinctness between the two countries. If after a Union the interests of the two countries were always to be in opposition to each other, undoubtedly the Irish members would be out-voted; but when the interest of the two countries are identified, when that which is the interest of the one must be the interest of the other, there can be no such opposition. That number will be sufficient to protect our interests, because it is true in politics as it is in mechanics, that when a great body is in motion, it may be guided and influenced by a body that could not resist it. I am really fearful of being tedious; I would not unnecessarily occupy the time of the Committee, after what has been said with respect to the subjects of trade and finance; but I cannot avoid calling the attention of the Committee to one circumstance, which is, that if this measure is not adopted the expences of this country will render it impossible for her to go on; she must in a short period become a bankrupt if this opportunity is not taken of reducing her expences.

I will shew gentlemen a statement of the difference of the expence this country will incur by adopting or rejecting this measure, and I am sure it is well worth attention. With respect to the parliamentary part of this subject I will only say one word, and that is with respect to the compensation which it is proposed to give for boroughs. It is an admitted principle that private advantage must give way to public good. It is assumed by those who support this measure that it is indispensable that a certain number of boroughs should not return members to the Imperial Parliament. It is but just that those who make this sacrifice should be remunerated. This principle of compensation has always been acted upon.—When the Court of Wards was abolished a compensation was given to the Crown. The same system was acted upon in Scotland, where the the principles of the constitution are as well understood as they are here, a full compensation was made to the individuals when the heritable jurisdictions were taken away. It is therefore clear that

that private advantage should give way to public good, and that those who make such sacrifices should be compensated. But it is said that this idea of compensation is a system of bribery; if it is the most extraordinary species of bribery that ever was practised, and fit only for the parliament of Boeotia, for arts equally on both sides. When once the principles by which the compensation is to be paid is laid down, it will not be in the power of the Minister or of the parliament to say who shall or who shall not be compensated. If no compensation was granted, is it not clear that every person who has a borough must see that if he votes on one side it will affect his interest, whereas if he votes on the other, his interest is unconcerned; but by this principle of compensation he will be at liberty to exercise his judgment without any possible bias; and therefore, I say, it is compensation only that can enable a borough-man to vote upon this subject with a clear conscience. With respect to the commercial part of this subject, I shall only lightly touch upon it now, because a more proper time will occur during the present proceedings upon this subject, I will therefore only at present say, that this plan includes all the advantages which were proposed to be given in the Commercial Propositions of 1785: it does more, it gives you the full and entire participation of the trade of Great Britain, which the Propositions of 1785 did not do. Her duties upon linen and woollen yarn were not taken off as in the present case, and the whole of the commercial system was left open to the discussion of the contending parliaments. By the Propositions Ireland was to pay a certain contribution when her income exceeded a certain sum; consequently you were to pay a contribution which must always encrease as your prosperity encreased. But by this measure you have a fixed contribution which cannot encrease beyond the fixed proportion.

As you stand at present, you are open in time of war to whatever demand the Minister may make; but in the case of an Union the demand must be limited—you cannot be asked more than your proportion; and therefore, I say, that both as it regards the trade and the contribution which this country is to pay, it is a measure infinitely more advantageous to her than the Propositions of 1785. I shall now, Sir, after thanking the Committee for the indulgence with which they have heard me, presume to move the first resolution:

Mr. GRATTAN said, that with respect to the subject before the House, it had been already discussed; and indeed the hon. gentleman had tripped over the ground with so light a foot as to have made no impression. He thought from the manner of the hon. gentleman's speech, that the subject had been deserted; he did not mean intentionally deserted, but there was in the whole of the hon. gentleman's speech something so frivolous, so inane, so flimsy, so gaudy, that he seemed rather to be a courtier adjusting his argument before a looking-glass than a senator speaking on the affairs of a country. The hon. gentleman seemed to supply his deficiency of ability and of argument by personality, and he did not think the hon. gentleman deficient in personal satire, though he thought him very deficient in the force of argument.

gument; instead of argument he had substituted slanderous insinuations against an individual. The hon. gentleman seemed to set the propriety and the necessity of the Union upon the ground of Catholic Emancipation—Parliamentary Reform—Particular Speeches made in that House, and publications on political subjects out of the House. Respecting Reform, it had been once attempted to stifle that measure in a perpetual Mutiny Bill. The hon. gentleman supported that Bill when it was brought in, and he remembered that the very same gentleman afterwards voted that Bill to be a grievance. It was attempted to stifle Parliamentary Reform by selling to the British Minister the Irish Parliament—by a Union of the two Legislatures. The noble Lord hoped to quiet the minds of the People and for ever put to rest the idea of Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation by purchasing the Parliament of Ireland with the money of the People. It reminded him of the poet's description of the man who

*Wisely hoping party rage would cease,
He buys both sides to give the country peace.*

Was there to be no such thing as publications on political subjects in the country? Did the hon. gentleman believe that the Parliament of the country would be removed without the People hearing of it? Was there to be no freedom of the press, was that to be removed also with the Parliament? Let not the hon. gentleman speak or hope so wildly as to say, that because the Parliament is to be removed there shall be no publications. The suppression of public opinion through the medium of the press, might be more dangerous than the freedom of discussion. Was the only way to stop the licentiousness of the press to stop the grievance—to take away the materials—what is the grievance?—the Parliament. The hon. gentleman had read a letter of his, (a) give him leave to say the hon. gentleman had misrepresented every period of it. There was not a passage related by the hon. gentleman that was fairly stated to the House, and though he misrepresented them to answer his own purpose, yet he was unable to argue upon them; and therefore it would have been wiser for the hon. gentleman not to have used them.—The hon. gentleman had stated a sentence out of that publication which he endeavoured to establish as intended against the present Parliament, which he must have well known did not apply to this Parliament, but to the borough Parliament of James the first; it alluded to the packed Parliament of that reign. Would the hon. gentleman deny that Parliament was packed? Would he deny that the retainers of the castle had endeavoured to destroy the liberties of the country? Would he defend that Parliament? Would he deny that fact? Would he say the attempt to pack a Parliament was never made by any minister? Would he say it was not attempted in the time of Lord Buckingham? The hon. gentleman had misrepresented him in other instances, and endeavoured to apply the paragraphs to the existing Parliament, in a language that a ballot-finger would be ashamed of. He must have well known that some of the observations in that publication applied to the Parliament of 1769, which Lord

Townshend

(a) *Mr. Grattan's Address to his Fellow-citizens of Dublin, printed by Stockdale*

Townshend boasted of, and which the Ministry had since ^{acted} they had procured at the expence of half a million. He had ^{acted} and always thought that the influence of the Crown might overturn the Constitution. Had not attempts been made on the integrity of the Parliament to induce it to give up itself? Could any man believe that any Minister could be so daring, so bold, as to think by a public robbery to steal the Parliament out of the country; that any Minister could have the impudence to ask a free and independent Parliament to give itself to Great Britain? Would the hon. gentleman look the House of Commons of Ireland in the face and boldly and honestly tell the House, that no Minister at any time had attempted to bribe a Parliament to vote away its own essence? If the hon. gentleman would get up and deny this, he would be glad to hear him. Would the hon. gentleman say that no Minister in any country ever attempted to do such an act?

The hon. gentleman had told the House, that the inflammatory speeches that had been made in the House, and the inflammatory publications that had been given to the public out of the House, had inflamed the public mind, and irritated the public feeling; but the hon. gentleman must have well known he was wrong in his statement; for he must have, no doubt, seen the declaration of O'Connor and two others; and what was their declaration?—that they had formed their connexion with France before ever those speeches were made, and he knew that they had declared, if at that time Parliamentary Reform had been acceded to, they would have broken off that connexion. The hon. gentleman must have known that those persons did declare they had no intercourse with the Opposition, but on the subject of Reform. But when the hon. gentleman came into the House of Commons of Ireland, with a treasonable motion in his hand, with a conspiracy against the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland, it was natural for him to charge an honest and an independent man with the crime of which he himself was guilty, and to charge the true and sincere friends and supporters of the Constitution with unqualified, abominable, and contemptible calumny.

If he was to say what was the cause of the rebellion that agrieved this country, if he was to say what was the cause of those convulsions that agitated the kingdom—he would say it was not the Parliamentary Declaimers that was the cause—it was not the publications out of the House that was the cause—but it was the Parliamentary pedlar, first speculating for bread and then for station, that caused the discontents of the country. He lamented the blots of the body, and he pitied the individual; he looked with respect towards the body itself, because he knew it possessed a salutary principle, which was the pledge of future virtue. There were defects in the Constitution: the side of the House on which he was wanted to remove them; they tried to cure the disorders, they recommended medicine, but the other side decried the medicine, they refuse to give relief, they thought and they said the patient is so ill don't try to cure him, he is past cure; kill him at once. What is the complaint? the patient has a pain in his head; give him what will relieve him; no, that

won't let off his head. They first propose the cure of the Constitution, and then they propose the death of it. He would always defend his public character and conduct against any gentleman on the other side of the House, however he may recommend himself to power. With respect to that part of the hon. gentleman's speech which went to want of responsibility in the minister, he would examine it—What was the argument?—That the Constitution of Ireland was not sufficient to secure the responsibility of the Irish Minister. The English Minister certainly is not responsible to this country, but the Irish Minister is, if he does not run away from the country, but if he runs from the country and from punishment, he then is not responsible, and public justice would probably be eluded. What was the case of the Marquis of Buckingham?—he was obliged to pacify the House or he could not have staid in the country. The Constitution was not so bad as the hon. gentleman wished to insinuate. With respect to trade and to treaties, where was the security if the Parliament was removed that either would be protected by the Imperial Parliament? Ireland had as much influence as her wealth and her population entitled her to. The hon. gentleman said, that the power of this country was great in the scale of war, and that to get rid of that power the country must give up her Parliament. If this country could not controul Great Britain in making or carrying on war, it was because the population of England was ten millions, and that of Ireland only four. Suppose the King of England to reside in Ireland would not the Parliament of England still have more power than that of Ireland, because the physical force of the country would continue. How did the noble Lord mean to supply the weakness of this country and give it more strength?—by taking away the Parliament? Three hundred men of fortune and independence in Ireland were not sufficient to controul the country in matters that concerned the country alone, and therefore let the three hundred men be reduced to one hundred, and let those hundred men be sent to England and then what would be the consequence?—Why there would be no power at all. It has been denied that the country possessed any Constitution; it was now asserted that the country had a Constitution; it was asserted that the country was so powerful she ought to give up her Constitution. It was endeavoured to be imposed on the People of Ireland that they ought to be satisfied with any Constitution. If the Constitution be not sufficient for all the purposes of power, which he denied, it was no Constitution; it might require a few alterations, but the great object of the People of Ireland ought to be to preserve their Constitution, to preserve that Constitution which the Minister would put to the sword.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER rose in reply, and expressed his sorrow that the hon. gentleman had not been present when he first addressed the House, as he would then have known that he had expressly declined entering into an extensive field of observation on the question, because it had been ably discussed before, and must be again discussed in detail. (He then reverted to his former

mer and made other quotations from Mr. Grattan's pamphlet to prove that he had not misrepresented him.) He did not come into Parliament for bread; he was in that situation that rendered him independent of every man living—He never owed an obligation to any man; and if he had been put into an enviable situation it was not by a mean compliance to the wishes of any party: he never deserted any measure he thought he was right in supporting; he did support the measure of a Parliamentary Reform, even when he was a servant of the Crown. He represented an independent borough. He scorned to apply to any party for support. If he had intended an attack upon the hon. gentleman, it was not his person or his talents he would attack, he would have spoken to him of treason and rebellion; he would have spoken to him of the rebellion from which he fled, after he had assisted in originating it by his inflammatory speeches and his writings: he would have spoken to him of his right to sit in the House after his return before his character was inquired into—he would have had it inquired into before the hon. gentleman should have got leave to sit in the House: he would have told him of his private association with rebels and traitors, whose lives were justly forfeited to the country by the counsels and speeches of the hon. gentleman. He would have called on him, (as he trusted he had done), to justify his conduct to the world. The hon. gentleman is charged with being the associate of traitors, has he denied it?—he does not deny it.

MR. GRATTAN.—In reply said, he did not wish to interrupt the hon. gentleman which he might have done, because there was not a word he uttered that was not a gross violation of the privileges of the House. He was persuaded of the difficulty the hon. gentleman laboured under when he attacked him and therefore he wished to hear him out, knowing, as he did, that on a comparative view of their characters both public and private, there was no one thing the hon. gentleman could say, that could take away the character of an honest and an independent man: the public would not believe the charge—he despised the falsehood; the condition of the slave is beneath the sentiment of friendship. The hon. gentleman had said, that by his counsel the rebellion had been brought about, the hon. gentleman ought to have known that no man of honour would have made that charge against him, and the hon. gentleman draws his conclusions from the report of the secret committee of the House of Lords. Had any man out of the House, said what the hon. gentleman had mentioned in the House, his answer would be a blow—He would not care how high his situation, how frivolous his character, how contemptible his speech; whether he was a privy counsellor or a parasite; whether he was a pedlar or a half fool, or a half coxcomb, or a half swindler, his answer would be a blow. The hon. gentleman had said, he was connected with the rebels. It was false, it was utterly, totally, and meanly false. He ought not to have come down to the House with falsities. He would not treat the hon. gentleman like a ruffian. He would not tell the hon. gentleman that he treated him like a coward because the hon. gentleman was a member of Parliament; but if he had said when

the hon. gentleman had declared he would feel that he had acted as a coward? Would the hon. gentleman rely on the report of the House of Lords for the foundation of his assertions. If he did he would prove to the committee that there was a physical impossibility of that report being true. He would not connect himself with a set of men who were in the act of treason against the constitution, who, if the constitution was in its full force and energy ought to be impeached of high treason against the constitution. If he had been connected with rebels why did not the hon. gentleman impeach him. He defied the hon. gentleman, he defied the government; let the whole phalanx of the government come forth, he defied them all—he would neither give them quarters nor take it at their hands. He scorned to answer any man for his conduct, whether he was a coxcomb or a political jack-a-naps, whether he brought himself into power by a false glare of courage or not, he would scorn to answer any wizard of the castle throwing himself into fantastical airs; but if an honorable and independent man was to make a charge against him, he would say; you charge me with having an intercourse with rebels, and you found your charge upon what is said to have appeared before the committee of the House of Lords; Sir, the report of that committee is totally and egregiously irregular. (Mr. Grattan then read a letter which he received from Mr. Nelson who had been examined before that committee, stating that what was reported respecting Mr. Grattan was not the testimony that had been given.)

From the situation he held, and from the connexions he had in the city of Dublin it was necessary for him to have frequent intercourse with various descriptions of persons. The hon. Chancellor of the Exchequer might as well have been charged with a participation of the guilt of those traitors for he had communicated with some of those very persons on the subject of parliamentary reform. At the time of the emancipation of Ireland in 1782, he took a leading part in the affairs of that day, in the formation of that constitution that was now endeavoured to be destroyed. And what were they debating about? About that very constitution of which he was the author and which he gloried in, and for which the hon. gentleman ought to praise him. The hon. gentleman had stated that want of ability made him abandon the profession of the law, the hon. gentleman had been of that profession too, and probably when he spoke of inability to follow it; he spoke from a conviction of his own talents, and found that the house of a great man was a more convenient way to power and to place, that friends were better than clients; and that it would be better for a statesman of small talents to sell his friends than to sell his clients. Whatever great bodies of the people had said or done to him, he forgave them from his heart, he felt he had done too much for his country to be vexed at them. He would rather they should not feel the acknowledgment; what he had done for them and call him traitor, than that he should sell them. He would always defend himself against the ruffian; but with the large body of the people it was different; he felt he had done them so much service, that though they might be his enemy, he could never be their enemy.

He did not run away from the danger of the rebellion; he was away when it happened and he would not have returned without taking a part, and he was convinced that the ministers of the crown were the traitors to the constitution. There was a rebel camp on one side—there was the minister's camp on the other, as great rebels to the constitution as the men that opposed them. He was charged with returning to take part in a new political storm. He returned to support the constitution, he returned to confront those cowards that had calumniated him. He returned if necessary to lay the remains of his weak constitution on the floor of the House for the welfare of his native land.

General HUTCHINSON.—As I have been sometimes in the habit of taking part in the debates of this House, it is impossible for me to avoid giving the reasons which have operated to decide my conduct on this important occasion.

The first argument against the Union is, that we surrender the independence of our Legislature, and submit ourselves to the controul of a foreign parliament. Now, I say, that we are already under the controul of that parliament, in all questions of external legislation, and must ever continue so, as long as England retains her superiority over us, and Ireland remains an inferior member of a great empire. The first moment you make a practical use of your independence, and presume to interfere in the great questions of imperial legislation, your own existence is threatened, the dissolution of the empire approaches. Your co-equality with the parliament of Great Britain is the dream of fancy, which can never be realised. You must tread in all her steps. Her friends must be your friends. Her enemies must be your enemies. Who would fear your hostility? who would respect your neutrality? You are at present confined within the narrow sphere of internal policy, and condemned to legislate alone for a turbulent distracted province. You may deny your inferiority, and guild your submission with the proudest appellations. You may talk of rights which you possess but in name; and of powers which you dare not exercise; but you cannot move out of the sphere within which it is decreed you should act, without dissolving the connexion, subverting the empire, and ruining yourselves. Let me ask you do you acquire nothing when you obtain the right of interfering in the great and imperial concerns of a great and noble empire? When Europe and Asia, the East and the West shall be opened to the Irish gentleman for the display of those talents which so eminently distinguish him.

Much has been said of the adjustment of 1782. For my part I do not know what finality means in human affairs. It might have been final as far as the then existing circumstances of things admitted; but it never can be supposed to bind all posterity, and to act as an interdict against the wisdom, the experience, the necessities of ages yet unborn. We have lived to be witnesses of events, which could not have been in the contemplation of the most sagacious man then alive. The French revolution has astonished and shaken a trembling world; has menaced the dissolution of the British empire, and deluged this country in the blood of her own citizens.

citizens. What resource does the settlement of 1782 afford in our present disastrous circumstances? We were not then threatened by external hostility, and domestic aggression. The embers of a rebellion, scarcely yet extinguished, were not then warm under our feet. Remedies could not be applied at that time to disorders which exist now. You then established the independence of your parliament, and rescued your rights from the usurpation of a foreign legislature. The contest was worthy and magnanimous on your side; the concession was wise and salutary on the part of Great Britain. But we cannot be guilty of such treachery towards ourselves, and of such delusion towards our constituents, as to be unwilling to acknowledge that that settlement neither gave peace, strength, or security to this unhappy country. You contended then for liberty---you contend now for government---for your honors, your properties, your principles, and your lives. In 1798, did rebellion array itself in order to procure the independence of parliament? No, they armed for its extinction. Was it to strengthen, to secure, to render immortal the British connexion? No, it was to dissolve it for ever, and to establish in its room French alliance, French confiscation, and French anarchy. Eternal hatred to England, eternal amity with France, was the sworn creed of those doctors of the new light, of those apostles of the modern doctors of liberty and equality. Irish independence under French protection, was the watch-word which echoed through their ranks on the day of battle. Irish independence, which if it could be obtained without guilt, would be the height of folly and madness to aim at. Suppose for a moment, that there was no honest prejudice in favour of Great Britain---no common links of attachment---no ties of blood---no similarity in manners, laws and language---yet still, I say, that connexion and union with Great Britain ought to be the council and sound policy of Ireland. Surely, it is better for you to be a component part of a great and free empire, than a weak and petty state, standing alone, resting on the forbearance of a treacherous and despotic ally.

During the discussion of this subject, I have heard something of the treachery and perfidy of Great Britain. For my part I cannot apprehend it, because I am sure she cannot be false to us, and remain true to herself. I do not mean to panegyrize what was once the conduct of Great Britain towards this island: her circumscribed folly induced her to adopt an idle and dangerous line of policy, which her capacious wisdom has long since taught her to respect. It would be something more than adulation to a greater country not to acknowledge that we are as necessary to her as she is to us. England, like other countries, has her follies and her faults, her vices and her crimes; but there never was a nation to whom a peculiar degree of sound sense and solid reason might be so justly attributed. Do you think that at this day she remains unconvinced that your prosperity is her prosperity, your resource her resource? What has she acquired by your poverty? In the last war she more than once paid your army from her treasury; in this she has assisted you by her credit, and guaranteed to her merchants your

loans.

loans. Your population, your ports, the redundancy of your corn, your military energies, are all necessary to Great Britain. She has been the constant sufferer by all your calamities; the partner of all your distress. Do you think that it is, by perfidy and treachery a wise nation can hope to strengthen herself, or secure you? No, She must be convinced that when you sink, she totters—when you fall, her power vanishes; her empire menaces ruin; her reign is extinguished.

For my own part, Sir, I cannot look round this island, or survey Europe without being thoroughly convinced of the necessity of some change. The present constitution of Parliament cannot last—the experience of two centuries is against it. The failure is manifest: it has weakened the empire without strengthening you. Formed for the infancy of a foreign and a little colony, it has sunk before the manhood of a great nation, and has become private property and not public right. The diminution of the legislature has been in the direct proportion with the increase of the country. If this parliament had been found entirely competent to preserve the national tranquillity—if no external circumstances had taken place to require a closer connexion with Great Britain—I should not have voted for the Union. But if within every thing is hollow, if without every thing is menacing—let me ask you where is your remedy against eternal distraction? Where is your shield against foreign invasion? What is property without security? What is liberty when life is in danger; and when the house of a country gentleman must either be his garrison or his tomb.

I am perfectly convinced of the political necessity of endeavouring to preserve a sense of national dignity. It is the source of all pre-eminence—the fountain of glory to nations, and of honour to individuals—the origin of all power, strength, and greatness. I wish, amidst the wreck and ruin which surrounds us, that we had any thing to nourish this noble passion—any thing to soothe vanity, or console pride. But the history of this country for the last six centuries has been the sad, degrading, melancholy picture of barbarous discord and savage acrimony—of party zeal and sectarian struggle—a fugitive government without fixed principles—a Minister without responsibility—a parliament fearless of the people, from whom they did not derive their origin—a triumphant aristocracy, and a nation in chains. Your rights were invaded—your commerce annihilated—your constitution lay in the dust. You submitted to be slaves abroad, provided you were allowed to be tyrants at home. Certainly for the first eighty years of this century the government of this country was the most arbitrary and oppressive of any in Europe. Every weak habit in the human intellect—every bad passion of the human breast—every base disposition of our infirm nature, were called into action—presided at the judgment seat of justice, and expounded a code, whose monstrous absurdity was only to be equalled by its sanguinary cruelty—a code, unexampled in the annals of civilized man, which put three-fourths of the inhabitants

inhabitants of this country out of the protection of the law, which gave any ruffian, who professed to believe the established religion, a power of invading the property of the innocent Catholic, and of seizing on the fruits of his industry. This criminal legislation offered premiums to hypocrisy and perjury, and endeavoured to secure the State by undermining the morals of the citizens. Certainly during the course of his Majesty's long and auspicious reign a wiser and more liberal line of conduct has been pursued towards this country; but in human affairs it is much easier to commit than to remedy an error—the wisdom of one age cannot always repair the folly of another. Though much of those laws have been repealed, the consequences of a barbarous code are still evident amongst us. The dregs of this deadly poison still remain, and have implanted in too many bosoms those unhappy jealousies---those ill-founded suspicions---those idle fears---those sanguinary passions, which with black malignant, rancorous, religious fanaticism, alone can exist.

The effects of this system were such as might naturally have been expected---Ireland in many respects sunk below the level of other European countries. It was impossible to hope for love to the law, zeal for the constitution, or attachment to the government; for protection is the parent of obedience, reverence and submission are its honorable children. That pure, un sullied, unalloyed allegiance, the vital principle of States, the only solid foundation of legitimate rule, which will not yield to the clumsy chain of force, but is created by benefits, acknowledged by gratitude, and nourished by hope, can only be expected by a good and beneficent government from a happy and contented people. Surely there must have been some pre-disposing cause, which rendered the admission of French principles more easy and more general in this country, than almost in any other in Europe. God has not cursed the land with barrenness, nor the people with intellectual darkness—much of the energies of an acute, a brave, and a generous nation have been suffered to prey upon its own powers, to rot and perish in obscurity, indolence, and wretchedness. The vice and virtue of subjects must generally be attributed to the government under which they have lived. Hard and oppressive laws naturally tend to corrupt the human heart, and to make man brutal and ferocious. If to this shall be superadded the tyranny of manners, more insulting and humiliating than any system of law, nothing can be more wretched than the state of such a nation, nothing more dangerous and more menacing than such a government, resting on so frail and tottering a foundation. What is the security of the tyrant? The debasement of his slave. What is his punishment? The corruption of his own principles.

The light of the French revolution with all its fond delusions, broke on a country where there was neither equal law nor equal liberty; where the line of separation between the rulers and the ruled was immense; where the spirit of persecution was substituted for the spirit of peace and charity, and even atoned for the want

religion itself. This island was therefore a prepared soil for the reception of Jacobin principles, and they have flourished with all the growth of rank luxuriance. If almost the whole people of England have flocked to the standard of royalty---if they have shewn the highest zeal for their constitution, and the greatest reverence for their laws, it has neither been the effect of passion nor of prejudice, but the wise and deep-rooted sentiment of the benefits which they have derived from the one, and of the protection which the other has afforded them. With a limited population---with natural resources by no means of the first magnitude, they have become a great and flourishing empire---commanding commerce---displaying a triumphant flag in every quarter of the globe---protecting Europe by its resources, its councils, its courage and its energies---rallying again the powers of the Continent to the standard of order, religion, and government---and covering the best institutions of social man with the adamant shield of true philosophy and immortal reason. From whence then arise the different circumstances of two islands only separated from each other by a narrow channel? Open the annals of your own country---ask your own hearts, and you will then find the solution of the problem. In what events of your history can you take pride? The past is without glory---the present is disastrous and humiliating---all is darkness and desolation around us. Oppression, rapine, anarchy, rebellion, follow each other in sad and melancholy gradation. The British constitution appears to have lain a dead weight upon us, inoppressive and oppressive---the magistrates without authority, the laws without respect. It would be absurd to argue, and a libel on the national character to assert, that the fault has been entirely with the people. He who was capable of maintaining that Ireland has been well governed, would pay an ill compliment to your understandings and be guilty of an idle perversion of the truth. We must acknowledge and deplore the sad circumstances of the times in which we live: Licentious manners---profligate morals---the perversion of all sound and honest principle---the ardent desire of the poor to invade the property of the rich, have not only menaced the entire overthrow of all governments, but the utter subversion of civilized society.

If these disorders, the common malady of the times, have been more severely felt in Ireland than almost in any other country; the reason is obvious: the law and the government warred too long against the dearest interests of the people. I will not do any nation in Europe the honour to place them in natural endowment above the inhabitants of this island: though certainly in acquirements they are inferior to those that surround them. It is nonsense to suppose that they could not be made as amenable to law as other men, or that they could not be convinced of the blessings of good government order and industry. There is even an energy in their character, and courage in their minds which might lead to great and noble exertions. I can safely put my hand to my heart and declare, that no Irish gentleman ever had prouder views for

his country than I had ; but my hopes are blasted—those ideal projects—those visions of national greatness are fled to return no more. Temporate reformation is impossible—Revolution is imminent—we must resist it, or perish. There is no remedy for our present disorders ; the contagious poison of jacobin principles has been poured upon wounds still fresh and bleeding : the too-general diffusion of those abominable principles were the real origin of the late rebellion. I am persuaded that religion, Catholic emancipation, or parliamentary reform had very little to do with it ; they might at first have been the pretext, but they never were the efficient cause : it was an attempt to carry on a war on a new principle, which had not its origin here, but which has invaded every country, and threatened every government. They did not seek to reform the parliament, but to overthrow the State ; they did not wish to emancipate the Catholic, but to proscribe the land-holder of both communities : they armed the strength of the poor man with the dagger of the assassin to plunder the rich, in order afterwards to enslave both. Jacobinism appears for a time to have erected its favourite throne in this ill-fated country ; that infuriate power, alike remorseless and ungovernable—unawed by conscience—unsubdued by reason—laughs at the credulity of man, and mocks his sufferings ; it talk of our equal rights to destroy every right ; it fires the palace to invade the cottage ; it deposes, it murders kings, to trample on their subjects ; a persecutor without religion, a sanguinary bigot without faith ; it does not war with one law, but with every law ; it does not attack one government, but every government ; it does not proscribe one religion, but every religion ; all that habit has rendered dear, time rendered venerable, or faith rendered sacred, falls before its exterminating sword.

Had the parliament of Ireland worked the good and the happiness of the people of Ireland, I would not have voted for this measure, however beautiful and elegant the theory of Union may be ; for in political life I shall ever prefer practical experience to distant speculation ; but I am convinced that Ireland would be better governed after the proposed arrangement, than under the present system. I disapprove of the past, I have no hopes for the future ; I have no doubt that the conduct of the united parliament will be wise towards the empire, and consequently fair and honorable towards Ireland. The animosities of sects in our time will never cease ; reconciliation is impossible ; there is no charity amongst us—there is no hope of peace. It is necessary to remove us from a paltry, narrow, circumscribed theatre, where all the little passions of little minds can display themselves in the fullest extent ; where religious controversy will still continue to afflict and disgrace us—where there is too much prejudice calmly to discuss, and too much passion to be wise. Go and unite with a nation more fortunate and enlightened than yourselves ; you take with you a country shackled and manacled—outraged and deformed by the wicked policy of man, but arrayed in all those capabilities which bountiful nature, with a profuse and prodigal hand, has poured upon her. Go, and

may your future history be as honourable and glorious, as your past has been calamitous and disgraceful.

I have now given you my reasons for voting for this measure. They may be weak and futile—they may be such as cautious prudence would not suggest, or timidity avow; they are the sentiments of a man who values you too highly, and respects himself too much to think concealment justifiable on a vital question. I should wish to retain your good opinion, but I am determined never to forfeit my own. If I have wounded the pride, or shocked the prejudices of many amongst you, I sincerely regret it; but I never can repent it. The times in which we live place us above all the cold civility of parliamentary forbearance. Every man is not only at liberty, but is bound to assign the reasons which have governed his conduct. I have given you mine, without private interest, without passion, and without fear. No popular delusion, no idle clamour, no false misrepresentation shall ever induce me to depart from what I consider to be a great fundamental truth; that, the best government for these countries is one executive and one legislature; a connected people, and an united parliament. Whatever may be the fate and fortunes of this great measure, I shall ever assert, I shall ever defend my conduct; to have voted for the Union shall be the pride and boast of my political life.

Mr. MARTIN.—Also rose to support the measure. He said, as what he meant to offer to the Committee applied particularly to Mr. Grattan, and that as that gentleman was not in his place he would reserve to himself an opportunity of speaking when that gentleman returned.

M. ALEXANDER, also, supported the principle.

Mr. TIGHE, said, that if what had been urged by the gentlemen who were favourable to the measure of an Union could be called debate, the arguments tended but to this, that as soon as the measure passed there will neither be freedom of speech nor liberty of the press in Ireland. It had been attempted to make the question, a question between the Catholics and the Protestants. It was no such thing; and this was laid as one ground to destroy the constitution. The present state of Ireland was made another pretence for subverting the constitution of Ireland. Temporary expedient was made another argument. The constitution possessed one fundamental maxim, a maxim that ought never to be lost sight of, that ought never to be surrendered, and that was, to be governed by an independent parliament, consisting of an hereditary national house of lords, a distinct national house of commons, and to have a distinct national resident independent representation of the people. In better times the measure brought forward by the minister would have been discussed not in a free and independent house of commons, but on the scaffold. It was from France that the minister of this country imbibed the principle of making the liberty of the country subservient to temporary expedience: but for that, the states-general of France might have remained and the constitution be saved under a limited monarchy. But this country he trusted would never forsake the great land-mark of their liberty.—What were the Eng-

fishman's ideas of Union? When Edward the Third prepared for the conquest of France, the People of England prayed that they might never be added to France, that there never might be an union between the countries; and the answer of the king was so gracious that in the fourteenth year of his reign it was enacted into a law. The star of liberty that rose in Ireland in 1782 will never set but in the midst of despotism and over a sea of blood. To preserve the connexion between Great Britain and Ireland every man ought to sign a petition against the Union. He would think himself unworthy of the situation he held in the country, of the little property he possessed, of the trust reposed in him as a representative of a free people if he did not sit in the house of commons of Ireland to defend the constitution and to support the British connexion. It will be by the constitution of Ireland and not by the British army that connexion will remain.

Colonel COOTE expressed in strong terms his support of the measure of Legislative Union, from the conviction of his heart and judgment; that he did not ascribe improper motives to any of the gentlemen who opposed the measure; he was aware, that on the first view of it, it appeared humiliating to the country, and therefore required us to penetrate its drapery, and to weigh the advantages in a large and liberal scale, and not in a local one to be convinced of its utility. He was sorry to differ from those he loved and respected, and from many men of character and property in the county he had the honour to represent. He, however, had the satisfaction of knowing, that there were also many men of value in character and property, who thought favourably of the measure, and that the weight of property was decidedly in favour of it. When the opinions of the people are divided, the constitution has not pointed out any mode by which the instructions of our constituents are to be followed; and Judge Blackstone declares that members of Parliament are the representatives of the whole kingdom.

That to him it appeared that the interests of Ireland called for, and required the measure, that Ireland is weighed down by internal discontents, jealousies, and animosities, and therefore our present political system carries along with it the seeds of its own destruction; a system he had never supported, having uniformly resisted the change of those laws, under which the country was happily governed, and the repeals of which have since produced discontents and distractions, and almost convulsed Ireland. "*Possit liberare animum suum*;" having acted a consistent and firm part in the support of the Protestant interest and government of Ireland. What is now the political state of Ireland, if we give more power to the Catholics? We shall have a Catholic Parliament, and can the empire long stand with a Protestant Parliament in England, and a Catholic one in Ireland? Must not the Protestant power and church of Ireland fall to the ground? But it is argued, how will Union put an end to Catholic claims and emancipation, to this the answer is obvious, that in the Imperial Parliament their claims will be heard without passion or prejudice, and without the risque of separation between the two kingdoms,

kingdoms, and whatever the result shall be, the interests of the empire will be secured, and the Protestant power and government of both countries preserved, and not left to the chance of collusion and distraction. If we concede reform in Ireland, what will result from it but to enable the Republican to overthrow the Constitution, and to separate Ireland from England. Therefore to eradicate these political evils from the Constitution, he was a decided friend to Legislative Union, as the best remedy to heal our wounds, to prevent the agitation of political evils, and the instigation of rebellion. That the terms and detail of the measure were now before the public, that it now would appear what it really was, to be entitled to our support as an object of policy, and not of revenue, and the itinerant declaimers against Union can no longer delude the people, by telling them that Mr. Pitt only sought by a Union to impose on Ireland the burdens and the debt of England. It now appeared that Ireland would be essentially benefitted in respect to finance and contribution, and that new channels for trade, new resources of wealth would be opened to us. To those narrow and contracted minds, who had fears from their suspicions of a future violation of the terms proposed to us, he begged to oppose the evidence of fact and experience. The national faith of England with Scotland for a century inviolably kept, it is proved in every instance, by the land tax, and by a large tract of country the property of a Mr. Forbes, near Cul-loden, which under an old grant from the Crown was exempt from the excise and distillery laws, and remained so, highly injurious to the revenue, without any infringement by this exemption; the lands were lately purchased by Government by an act of Parliament.—If property is to suffer from a Union, he must equally suffer with others, he had no such fears, nor had he ever altered his plans for improving the country where he lived, or dismissed a labourer, and with pride and pleasure he could say, that he expended his income in employing people, and encouraging industry; that he hoped to see the value of property increase and not diminish, as it had done in Scotland, and he predicted that it would be in Ireland as it was in Scotland, the posterity of those who opposed the Union with Scotland, now revere the memory and the patriotism of those who brought it about: so will the posterity of those who now so warmly oppose us, revere the character and government of Lord Cornwallis, who, I hope, will accomplish this truly patriotic measure; and the thinking part of Ireland will soon applaud our conduct.—
“Opinionum commenta delet vatunæ judicia confirmat.”

Mr. BELFORD said, he rose to declare himself a decided enemy to the Union. He thought it necessary to say a few words, because it had been said, those who opposed the measure were apparently connected with rebels—he was of no party but on the side of virtue.

Mr. ROSS MAHON—In presuming to offer my sentiments to the Committee, I am well aware that I may incur the charge of much presumption, but from the opinions I have ever held upon the subject, I have felt it a duty to my country to give my best support to the measure of a Legislative Union. I feel that I owe it also to myself

myself to explain the ground upon which those opinions are formed, since I differ with many whom I highly respect, both within and without these walls, and I shall hope for the indulgence of the Committee, both because I do not often intrude myself upon the notice of the House, and because I can with truth assure them that the support I have given to this measure, is not only uninfluenced, but unaccompanied by any object of a private nature.

If I consider Ireland in that state of advancement which I think her capable of attaining, provided the connexion lasts, it is not only probable, indeed evident in theory, but proved in practice, that differences upon imperial questions must arise between the two countries if they retain separate Legislatures, and have distinct interests, it is not in human nature, that Ireland improved in wealth, population, and consequent weight in the empire, should bear with those inferiorities to which the most strenuous opposers of Union profess themselves willing to submit; that she should bear with the influence of British Councils over her concerns; with her own want of influence in those of peace, war, and foreign treaty, in all which she must feel increased interest; and I am convinced that under a system which renders the bulk of our population inimical to British connexion, a system to which I can see no favourable end except in Union, the very dependence of our Crown upon that of another country, to which we may feel ourselves equal hereafter, and of which we profess ourselves to be independent, must ultimately be felt a grievance; and total separation follows as the only means of redress by the patriots of that day, a thought becoming the dignity of powerful, independent, and imperial Ireland.

If I am justified, as I think I am, in considering that a tendency to separation will be a consequence of our prosperity, do we not, by rejecting the measure, render it the evident but unfortunately the necessary policy of Great Britain, to check our growth, lest we should out-grow our connexion; to retard our progress by artificial means; to rest satisfied herself with negative instead of positive advantages, from her connexion with this country, and to renew that system which, whilst it disgraced Great Britain so long, kept us down as a nation, until apprehension on one side, and a sense of injury on the other, shall have wrought up both countries to that disgrace of mutual jealousy and rivalry, which in some hour, fatal to both, shall compel Ireland to throw off, what we ourselves, by rejecting this measure, shall render a galling and oppressive yoke, instead of a bond of mutual amity and common interest, to commit what then in truth, gentlemen, might term a suicide upon herself, by becoming a province of France, or some country inimical to Great Britain, and the engine wherewith our enemies might affect the downfall of the British empire.

Let me not, however, be misunderstood; or supposed willing, from an apprehension of future ill, to submit to present disadvantage, by accepting of terms degrading to the honour, or injurious to the interests of Ireland, God forbid that I should rise from a seat in the Commons of Ireland, with the base, the traitorous design, intentionally

intentionally to surrender one atom of the rights or independence of my country; but I must have a mind strangely constructed indeed, if to accept a proportionate share in the supreme Legislature of that empire, in whose fate ours is involved, but in whose political arrangements we possess no direct weight or influence, be a sacrifice of our independence, or a surrender of our rights, for to me it appears an acquisition of power, an attainment of the only true, the only rational, the only lasting, the only honourable independence that Ireland can ever hope to enjoy; it depends upon the treaty we make, whether the measure be degrading to our honour, or injurious to our interests. I perhaps resent that system as much, and I am sure I despise it as heartily as any man who hears me; but is it because I resent, despise, and think it impolitic, that I am to follow the example of gentlemen on the other side, and adopt myself? It does not, in my mind, follow, that according to that system, if one country benefits the other must consequently suffer, (the hazard of separation not taken into account;) on the contrary, it is in imperial that I look to local advantages to both countries, and there is not one which Great Britain may ultimately receive that must not, in my mind, more speedily, and in a ten fold degree, be felt by Ireland. England, I believe, is sensible of the weakness and absurdity of that policy, at least we have the word of her Minister to that purpose; she finds by experience that the encrease of our trade has not injured her own: but she cannot look with indifference at our prosperity least the weakened bond which holds us together should at length fail; she calls on us to strengthen it for our mutual benefit: shall we then in the madness, and the idle boast of an ideal independence, neglect the only opportunity that ever has or ever may again occur to remedy the evils which we feel.

I deny that we are called upon to make any surrender, except a surrender of the defects of our Constitution and the misfortunes of our situation, unless we term it a surrender to give up a dominion over our Catholic fellow-subjects, which I am as anxious to give up as they are to receive, but which I should not be the true friend either of Catholic or Protestant if I would give up, unless when I could do it with perfect safety to the state. We should, however, recollect that she has that yet to give, without whose influence, however distant, our boasted independence were nothing worth; without whose influence we could not avail ourselves of one of those advantages, natural or acquired, which we possess; she has to give us the reality of the British Constitution instead of its empty shadow, its base deformed representation. We should recollect farther, that it is from the removal of obstacles to our prosperity, not from positive acquirements that we have hitherto received and are still to look to advancement: And if we will but turn our eyes on our own situation, we shall find obstacles sufficient to retard the progress of any country, and such as must long since have sunk us, had we not been buoyed up by that country with which we now hesitate to become one. We shall in our own situation, behold the edifice raised on a false foundation, and the superstructure faulty throughout.

We shall find that our Parliament does not, as it affects to do, and as the British Parliament does, emanate from the people; but that the government of the country is the rule of the few over the many, the dominion of an aristocracy, founded, as Mr. Adam Smith says, on the most odious of all distinctions, those of political and religious differences, and that by the frame and constitution of that Parliament the people are excluded their share in political power, the choice of Representatives to serve them in Parliament. We shall find that our establishment in Church and State runs counter to our population, rendering the smaller portion of our population dependent on Great Britain for support in power and in property, and the greater portion consequently inimical to British connexion. We shall find upon the whole that a distinctness arises from separate Legislatures, creating between states composing the same empire, and the different classes and persuasions composing the same state, that endless rivalry and implacable animosity, which invariably render this country a drawback upon imperial exertion in time of need, and in which I think I can see seeds of dissolution to the British empire.

Sir, it is to correct these radical faults, to remove this distinctness, to place all upon a firm, true and lasting foundation that I contend; it is to these circumstances that I attribute all our misfortunes, they render our government incapable of being well and steadily administered for the direct interests and happiness of the people, party jealousies and party struggles for political power fetter it in its operations, and oblige it one day in support of British superiority, the next of Irish independence, to-day of Protestant ascendancy, to-morrow of Catholic emancipation, now in support of one party, again of some other, amongst a corrupt and selfish aristocracy, to deviate from that steady, just, and, I will add, liberal line of conduct, which the true interests of the empire at large and of the community would point out, and to adopt such measures as the expediency of the moment may render necessary for the temporary preservation of a connexion, more desirable to Great Britain from the danger which this country would afford as a weapon in the hands of an enemy, than from any positive advantages, which in the present form of our connexion, she can derive from it herself.

I shall therefore conclude, that an injury is likely to result from it, and if the British Constitution, unobscured by the foul medium of a separate Legislature, and distinctness of interest between the countries, shall spread its bright rays over this hitherto unhappy land, I as an Irishman, shall think the change happy indeed.

One effect, however, I can trace, and that is an effect to which I am the friend, as I am of the most perfect liberality to my Catholic fellow-subjects, when it can take place with safety to the state, but not otherwise, I mean an increase of weight to the people in the Legislature, and if a number of representatives, adequate to the true weight of this country in the empire, shall be chosen from the counties and principal towns in Ireland, and chosen by popular voice, the Union does nearly, by the whole amount of the representation of

of Ireland, go to encrease the weight of the united people in the united legislature. If it is objected that the patronage of the crown, from being limited to a smaller number, may injuriously counteract the weight of the people, let the fault be corrected, either by encreasing the number of representatives, or by such regulations as may diminish the patronage of the crown; but it seems to me to be merely a matter of detail, and no argument against principle.

If the Union has a tendency to this, as to the empire at large, in how much greater a degree does it operate as to Ireland in particular; in the distinctness of interest between the countries, in the necessary inferiority of ours, and in the frame and constitution of Irish Parliaments, I can see why the Irish people do not carry their due weight in the empire at large, or in their own country in particular; but I cannot see why a number of gentlemen of the first character and properties in Ireland, not only themselves the most interested in the welfare of this country; but if an additional tie were wanting, chosen by popular voice, and relying upon popular approbation for re-election, should urge with less zeal the interests of Ireland in the imperial than in the local Parliament, or urging them should do so with less effect, because only all distinctness of interest between the countries was done away, and Irish prosperity became British advantage. I respect as much as any man alive the opinions opposed to me; but upon a subject of such importance, I cannot surrender my judgment unless my reason is convinced.

Am I, on account of the arrangement made in 1782, (however Ireland may boast of that arrangement, and England blush at the necessity of its being demanded,) am I on account of that arrangement to be deterred in 1800, from remedying those defects in our situation, whose practical bad consequences, two events beyond the reach of human wisdom to foresee, I mean his Majesty's unfortunate illness, and the revolution of France have clearly pointed out? Am I to prefer the less profitable expenditure of money by a few Irish country gentlemen, even supposing (what I absolutely and positively deny,) that the number of our absentees should encrease; to that which is most wanted amongst us, the wide diffusion of capital usefully employed, which could not fail to flow into our land, the moment that in addition to lower rate of taxes, lower price of labour, and those advantages which nature has lavished on this country, was added to that security to property which a common and more pure legislature could not fail to give, but which our present false and corrupt system never has, and I verily believe, never can possibly afford?

Am I, as an Irish elector, the only political situation in which I ever shall stand if the measure takes place, to prefer the superintendence of a local legislature over local concerns, to a due participation in the supreme legislature of the greatest empire in the world, of which we now compose a distinct and a dependant part? Am I to believe that it is by the impoverishment of this country, and the destruction of its trade, that the greatest financial minister that ever existed, means to render it an object of resource in a commercial

cial empire, of which this island is the spot best calculated, from climate, soil, insular situation, and innumerable other circumstances, to bring to the highest degree of perfection agriculture, manufactures and commerce? Sir, it is contrary to my reason, and I cannot believe that some of those who oppose this measure, and I am convinced oppose it from principle, are influenced themselves by such arguments as they advance to us. If such shall be made apparent to me, I trust I shall oppose the measure as strenuously as those who make much more noise in this House. I hope with as pure intentions, until they are proved to me, I must abide by the conclusions which my own humble understanding enables me draw. I shall, to the latest hour of my existence, glory in having preferred the true interests of my country, to a momentary popularity: if, on the contrary, events will prove me wrong, whilst no man will more sincerely lament his error, I shall yet find that consolation which I wish to every gentleman who has given his vote on the one side or on the other of this important question, in being able to reflect, that to the best of my ability I have exerted myself steadily, zealously, disinterestedly, and honestly, to promote a measure, which I believe, as I believe in my existence, to be the only one which can give to my own country, and to all classes, all descriptions, and all persuasions of my Irish fellow-subjects their due weight in the empire, and which I think calculated to raise the British empire to a degree of power, and to give it a degree of durability unequalled by any country in the annals of the world.

Sir JOHN PARNELL opposed the motion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He combated the question of Legislative Union, not only as contrary to the principles of the Constitution, and a violation of the settlement of 1782; but that even upon the terms proposed, no real advantage was intended to be given to this country, and were it even the case, there was no advantage offered that might not as well be granted without as with an Union. He then entered into a long discussion of the terms proposed by the noble Lord, and asserted that the calculations which he had made were not founded, and that they would not be supported by the real situation of the two countries. He contended that the noble Lord had taken his calculations from periods in which he was not justifiable, for he had taken them when the expences of this kingdom were at the highest, and the revenues at the lowest, and that if they were fairly taken, the proportion would not be as 7 to 1½, as stated by the noble Lord, but as 1 to 13.

Right Hon. the SPEAKER begged the indulgence of the House, as it was impossible for him to raise his voice high. When the subject now before the Committee was introduced into the House on the last Session of Parliament, there was no mention made of the details, and the House could then only go into the principle of the measure. Consolidation of strength and interest was then spoken of, words which were nothing but high sounding without any meaning; but now the details were before the Committee, and they were to look, not merely on the principle, but on those details. It

was the fashion for those who supported the measure, to deal in language he could not hear with patience, to assert the degradation of the country, to ransack history for the purpose of ascertaining the dependance of the country, and the People and the Parliament were told that they must change their situation and become united with England because their situation is so bad that it could not be worse. He appealed to every man who heard him, whether since the free Parliament was established, the country had not risen in every respect of trade, wealth, and manufactures, more than any other country in the world in the same given time, and to what was that to be imputed?—to our free Constitution. And what did the supporters of the measure of a Union mean to do?—to destroy that free Constitution. They want to deprive the country of its free Constitution. They say the Constitution of this country cannot exist independent of the British Parliament. The dependance of this country is not on the British Parliament; it is on the Crown of England; and that authority over the country is exercised by the Crown of Great Britain, by approving of or denying to give the Royal Assent to Acts passed by the Irish Parliament. It is an authority never exerted to our disadvantage. Has Great Britain from the revolution to the present hour ever exercised that power to our injury? Has England ever since the establishment of our free Constitution give a negative voice to any of our Acts of Parliament?—If she has not, our situation is practically independent, and theoretically dependent. What would the supporters of the Union have you do? They would have you be bound by Acts passed in the Imperial Parliament; they would have you be theoretically independent and practically dependent.

It was a curious circumstance to observe that in the last year, when this question was first proposed, the noble Lord told the House that the reason for the necessity of an Union with Great Britain was, that we were rich and prosperous, and he tells the House this year that the reason why we ought to have an Union is perfectly different from what it was at that period; that the country is so poor now, that an Union is absolutely necessary; that the country is so poor that England is desirous to make the country a present of half a million of money in time of war, and of one million of money in time of peace. Could any man that knew the candour and ingenuousness of the noble Lord and heard him make such a statement, believe it to be the genuine sentiment of his heart?

Before he went at large into the argument, he would advert to the circumstance of half a million in peace and one million in war being made a present to the Irish nation. Did the noble Lord mean to say that the zeal and loyalty of this country which it had manifested in granting the supplies, is to be termed as an argument against the country to take away the Parliament? Did the noble Lord mean to say that he has sat on the Treasury Bench, soliciting the country to go as far as she has gone, that having exerted herself beyond belief, and that he now comes forward and says he must give us an Union to save us from destruction? Did the noble Lord mean, in

return for our loyalty and affection, to smother and destroy us?—Did he mean to say that the British Minister could take better care of the prosperity of this country than her own Parliament could do? Was this the sentiment of the noble Lord last year when he boasted of the English militia having come over to Ireland; when an establishment was made for them; when he not only called on the House for the whole supplies, but tacked to it a request for the back quarter to bear the whole expence, which was given to him and would have been encreased if it had been requested? Did the noble Lord then think the House was going beyond the means of the country? Did he think he was making the People of Ireland pay more than they were able? And did the noble Lord now hold the doctrine, that because the People of Ireland did go beyond what they ought to have gone, that they must now go a little further, and give up their Constitution?

The noble Lord tells the country that in war it will save considerably by the Union, and he recurs to the expences of last year, and he tells the country that they will save a seventh and one half. The expences of Great Britain was 32,700,000*l.* was it fair to state a million saving from a year of such an extraordinary expenditure? But even with this extraordinary expenditure of last year, how does the noble Lord bear himself out in this calculation that we would have saved a million by his arrangement. The expence of Great Britain was 32,700,000*l.*—the expence of Ireland last year was 4,708,000*l.*—the expence it would have been at by his ratio of $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 is 4,492,000*l.* which would have been a saving only of 215,000*l.* instead of 1,020,000*l.* which he states it would have been, and which as a right hon. friend of his (Sir J. Parnell) stated to-night, is a very fallacious account, for the noble Lord takes a hypothetical expenditure up to next March, instead of the fair and actual expenditure to March 1799. It is in this way, Sir, we are to be bribed by the million a year to part with our free Constitution, when the actual saving would only have been 200,000*l.* had this measure taken place. It is cajoling us out of our free Constitution, which by the blessing of God we shall still preserve to the latest times.

But this was not all, if we are to take a retrospect, and by this we can go on facts, suppose that this Union and this ratio had been established six years ago, we should have had upwards of three millions to pay more than at present—and instead of saving one million, for as England raised last year by the Income Tax 11,500,000*l.* we would have had to pay in proportion a sum of 1,800,000*l.* and by which our debt would have been encreased more than 14 millions above its present amount.

These are the benefits we would have derived, and God knows to what further length it might go. The fact is, that all these calculations, which are stated to cajole us out of our Constitution, can have no weight with men of sense. The Union will not make any difference favourable to us in our expences—if Ireland pays less, England must pay more. The general expences of the empire must be defrayed—the House must be kept up—we wish to pay our part of

of it according to our ability. If England wants money, we will give all we can; we will save when we can do it, and aid in every way as far as we are able: let us only keep the purse in our own hands. So far from any saving on our establishment, the noble Lord states an encrease in the peace establishment of 500,000*l.* a year.

Is there to be no reduction of any kind? No—you are to have the whole of your Civil Establishment, your Exchequer, your Secretaries, your Commissioners, your every thing but your Parliament—It is the Parliament they want to remove and nothing else.

It is encroaching on the patience of the House to go on—but I wish to make myself understood—and I am persuaded that no honest Irishman when he considers and views attentively all those circumstances, and every thing respecting this wanton, unprecedented attack upon a country which has been going on in such rapid improvements by a local Parliament, will ever give his consent to abolish and annihilate it. He paid every attention to find if there was any thing he could meet with in the detail that could lessen the horror he felt at the measure; but in every ratio that is stated there is the greatest want of information, and complete ignorance of the relative state of the countries. The noble Lord assumed the ratio of $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 1, and taken the average on very vague and uncertain ground by an assumed calculation on our exports and imports and excise; whereas the true criterion of relative wealth is upon objects of internal transactions and conveyances, particularly the stamps and the post-office. By taking those which he has unaccountably left out, the average is 30 to 1 instead of $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 1. In the excise also, taken separately, and in the custom duties not bonded, there is the same proportion. The whole arrangement is so complicated, that it is naturally impossible to bring it into practice; separate accounts of revenue must be kept for the different appropriations to the debt of this kingdom, to the ratio to be paid to the united empire and to other purposes: so that instead of a Union, it is no Union—it is with a removal of Parliament to keep separate interests. The noble Lord, has, however, provided that we shall not die at once—we are to be ten years in dying by the gradual abolition of the duties; at the end of 20 years we are to be in a state so as to form an identity with England: 20 years is a very small period in the life of a nation; but notwithstanding which, a reprieve for 20 years would be of some importance to this kingdom.

Would the soldiery and the shipping be reduced, if there was an Union? No—the expence would be the same Union or no Union.

In the articles enumerated by the noble Lord, he forgot some which were particularly advantageous to a country. The stamps were not mentioned, which were certainly a criterion of the prosperity of the country; they bore to England an average of 1 to 18 from this country.

The post-office had been excluded; the revenue on that head was 80,000*l.* a year to Ireland.

Was

Was he to give the noble Lord credit for all the benefits to arise from the Union, how long were they to continue?—By the noble Lord's account, about twenty years! a short period in the life of a nation: and even if the propositions were of advantage, would it not be reasonable in Mr. Pitt to give a temporary advantage to the country in order that he might afterwards destroy those advantages as he liked? How would this temporary advantage affect the country at the expiration of the twenty years, when from the Union England would encrease in vigour and in trade, Ireland must at the discretion of the United Parliament give up those advantages which she now possesses, and those advantages which are held out to her, and is to bear equal taxes with England, when England has gained that decided advantage that would for ever injure the trade of this country.

The next thing the noble Lord had alluded to was the propositions of 1785—he would be sorry if, before he sat down, he could not convince the noble Lord, and every man who heard him, that the advantages they held out were infinitely beyond those of the noble Lord. He would be sorry he had been instrumental in forwarding those propositions if they contained so little advantage and benefit for Ireland, and so much injury as is now proposed. In the propositions of 1785, care was taken of every manufacture in the country, there was not a single branch that could be protected that was not. What were the propositions of the noble Lord?—To raise every duty that was below ten per cent. up to ten per cent. and lower every duty that is above ten per cent. down to ten per cent. In the article of wrought copper, that bears $10\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and by the proposition of the noble Lord, it is to be reduced to 10 per cent. There are at present 13 cotton manufactories in the country, they work about 5000 pounds of cotton, yearly. The duties on this article was from 30 to 50 per cent. and this the noble Lord proposed to reduce to 10 per cent. Could any man believe that the manufacturer will not withdraw himself out of a work when he felt the disadvantages under which he must labour; when he recollected that in twenty years every article is to be at the mercy of the United Parliament? Will not the manufacturer withdraw his capital, and that no man will set up in a manufacture where he sees he cannot gain, but must to a certainty be a loser? If the linen manufacture of this country was to be secured by the Union, the propositions would contain some article to that effect, but it does not contain any one article to give the linen of this country a preference for any one manufacture of Ireland over that of any foreign country. If the noble Lord would refer to the Journals of the House, and examine the report of Sir Lucies O'Brien in 1773, he would there see the compact entered into on the subject of the linen trade of the country. He could not help making one observation on the introduction of that part of the Propositions relating to the commerce of the country. It was the result of a deliberation in England between the noble Lord and the Minister of England and the Chancellor of the Exchequer: the noble Lord, no doubt, did every thing

thing he could at that conference to make the Propositions fair for Ireland; and yet what was the consequence—the moment they came to be stated to the House, he is convinced that they are wrong, and that they would be of disadvantage to the country, the moment the Parliament became united. It was not want of good will towards this country that originated the disadvantage; but the want of the power of proper information on the subject, from the hon. gentlemen who held the conference not being in the country. He was convinced if it was possible to have made them more to the advantage of the country than they were, it would have been done by the noble Lord, and yet notwithstanding the good sense and sound judgment of those who framed the commercial part of the Propositions, one single calico manufacture was able to convince the noble Lord of the disadvantages to be derived from that part of the system in a few moment's conversation, which the combined abilities of those who framed the Propositions could never foresee.

In the article of iron, the duty in Ireland is 12s. in England 3l. was there provision in the noble Lord's Propositions that the united Parliament should never equalize the duty on this article with England, and thereby leave the manufactures of this country totally destitute.

Salt and hops were never to have their duties lowered! though the duty laid upon hops merely for the encouragement of the brewers, was always the object of Irish Parliament, and yet there was no provision that the united Parliament should not take off the excise in England, and by that means gain a decided advantage over this country. In the course of two years the duty upon salt was raised from one shilling to three pounds; it was scarcely possible to believe that such a rise could take place on any article of import. What was to become of the duty upon coals? there was at present eight or nine shillings per ton, and this was to continue for ever, though the revenue raised on this article was principally levied with a view to the improvement of the city of Dublin. In England the duty upon coals is taken off in going to great manufactories, going to the copper works in Wales, to several of the works in Cornwall, to several parts of Scotland; but they are not to go duty free to any one part of Ireland but the duty is to continue with this difference; the English duty is to be taken off in England, but the Irish duty is to remain. He mentioned this circumstance because if a question of this nature was to arise in the united parliament we could not expect to have any able advocate who could point out the disadvantages arising to this country with success; and therefore, there could be but little hopes of ever obtaining any advantages for Ireland; it would be impossible to have any care taken of this country in the united parliament, if the representatives sitting in the House of Commons of Ireland, were not able to do it for themselves.

Would the regulation as to wool be of advantage to the country? He would not say, but he believed it could not be great: all the superfine cloths are made in England, Ireland produces the
courser

courser clothes. As to superfine wool this country has it as cheap as Great Britain, and therefore it can be no way concerned. What was another recompense that Ireland was to receive for giving up her parliament? She was to participate in the territorial revenue paid by the East India Company to Great Britain! An act passed in the year 1793 to compel the East India Company to pay to Great Britain 50,000*l.* and yet in the year 1800 the Company had not paid one penny. The act upon which this is founded would render it impossible for Ireland ever to derive any benefit from that compact, for it is in the controul of the lords of the treasury to remit or postpone the payment to any period they chose. He begged to ask one short question, was there any one possible advantage or benefit to Ireland that she does not now enjoy, that could be procured by the Union? Is there any one benefit that the Irish parliament is not as competent to procure for this country and more competent to procure than the United parliament? Has there been one argument advanced that could convince any reasonable man that any advantage could occur to Ireland?

A scheme so contrary to every constitutional principle never entered the head of any man in this country, as that which had been presented to the House by the noble Lord relative to the resolution which notices the constitution of the country. A scheme by which he establishes a sort of mongrel lords—lords and commons—commons and lords—so circumstanced as to be neither the one nor the other, but to have a bit of both so as to render him incapable of being either. It is a principal of the constitution that a lord shall not interfere in the election of a commoner to serve in parliament, a principle which this scheme directly overthrows. The majority of the nobility are to lose their privileges and their birth-right; they are not to be represented at all. A few are to be sent over to England—they are to continue for life—twenty-eight peers from Ireland are to sit in the English house for life—they will probably remain there. What would the noble Lord do with the rest? He leaves them without authority, he reduces their influence, his consequence must fail. If any man was to advise a scheme to depress the nobility of the country, it would be such a scheme as that already proposed.

With respect to the Commons of Ireland, they were to be reduced from 300 to 100. If the accumulated wisdom of 300 men has been necessary for the purposes of legislation; a violation of the constitution would be the consequence of reducing them to 100, by lessening the number he lessened the wisdom and energy of the country. Surely 300 Irish gentlemen would have more weight in the united parliament than 100 could have. No man of trade will give himself the trouble to go to England—he could not give up his time to quit this kingdom in order to sit in the united parliament—He could not give up his time and his business to spend eight months of the year to attend the business of a representative of the Irish nation in England; if the parliament remained where it was the man of trade and the country gentleman

man could give those necessary attendance, which, if removed, it would be impossible to give. In the same manner the gentlemen of the law, would be precluded from giving their attendance in the united parliament: the abilities necessary to support the Irish nation would be excluded; for no gentleman of that profession whose legal knowledge, and of great business, could ever give up his profession to go to England, whereas, if the parliament continued in Ireland, he might attend to both, with honour to himself and advantage to his country.

Another necessary consequence of the Union would be that the taxes would become perpetual. The advantage of preserving the purity of elections would also be lost—the free representation of the people of Ireland would be lost if the measure of an Union was passed. A contested election could not be tried in Great Britain without such an expense as would deter any man from prosecuting his petition how gross and palpable soever the bribery and corruption was, by which he was excluded from a seat in the representative. And if any man did prosecute the petition, what would be the consequence? The sheriff nominates the candidate, who nominates the sheriff? If any man doubts who nominates them, and how they are nominated, if any man doubted how they would act, let him look how they have acted in refusing to convene the freeholders when requested, in order to petition parliament against the abominable measure of a Legislative Union. When the House had such facts before them; when the sheriffs behaved in such a manner in the face of the parliament; how would they behave when they would be under no apprehension of reprimand. But suppose a gentleman did endeavour to shew the falsity of the returning officer, how could he compel witnesses to attend, if they did not choose to do so, or were afraid to do so? How long would the witness be detained in newgate for refusing to attend?—Who would send him there? Did the noble Lord mean to give Ireland a new constitution? Was it not in idea to increase the influence of the crown, to ruin the constitution of the country by taking away the parliament, and suppressing the possibility of a free representation.

On the whole of this argument it must be clear to a demonstration that this measure which is called a Union, does not deserve the name of Union. How could the interest of both countries be identified? The parliaments might become one; but the identity as it is called could not exist, it would be a union of the parliaments; and that which can only be a Union of the parliament is called a Union of the nation.

In the instance of revenue it is acknowledged to be necessary to keep the present debts distinct, and so long as they continue so, there must be separate accounts. How can the countries be consolidated? There are to be distinct accounts—distinct debts—and as long as those continue it is impossible there can be a consolidation of the nations. In point of the constitution a right is preserved to the king for ever, of making Irish peers to keep up the distinction of the peerage. If it had been determined to have had no

separate interest, why not suffer the peerage to diminish to 29; and then let them be created peers of the united realms, and not peers of Ireland alone. Another distinct interest is, with respect to the parliament, that peers may be commoners in one country and not in the other. Another reason that the interest cannot be consolidated: it is provided that the debts of the country should be separate—the current expenses of the country are to be separate. It is acknowledged that the independence of the country is so positive that when it may be necessary to raise money, it must be by loan in Ireland, when in England it is raised by taxes. The supporters of the Union go further; they acknowledge that this separate interest exists, and they provide for it—they endeavour to postpone the jealousy of the country for twenty years—they acknowledge the necessity of a separate parliament, for they acknowledge those advantages to Ireland which can only be retained by such a parliament. The duties in the channel trade are to be kept up, in that there is a separate interest so long as Ireland feels this distinction. A separate interest is acknowledged in the parliament of Ireland; for it is provided that the parliaments shall not be one, but that they shall be called by the name of the united parliaments.

He had been called upon to declare, if he had any authority to state what would become of the question of religion in Ireland if this measure did not pass? He would ask the hon. gentleman what authority he had to introduce it into the present question at all? How was it connected with the question of Union? Did the hon. gentleman mean to say, that the parliament of Ireland had not sense enough, nor candor enough to take care of religion in this country, and therefore that they must resort to a British parliament. What was the reason for throwing this slander upon the Irish parliament? He would tell what it was, it was to keep up a religious distinction and animosity in the country. He knew no distinction—he would exhort every man in the land to join heart and hand together in opposing the common enemy. He knew no distinction. If the people would join their hearts, if they join with other friends to oppose this measure; he would say all religious distinction was asleep. The Roman Catholic and the Protestant are equally the natives of Ireland, bound by duty to the soil of Ireland and to the prosperity of Ireland; and he would call them unnatural indeed if they did not join almost the voice and strength of Ireland in opposing this damnable and destructive measure: for this he would say, if he were to study the English language for months, to procure language strong enough to meet his wish, he could not procure words by which he could sufficiently express his horror of the consequences that may probably result from the measure if carried into effect.

Would driving men of property out of the kingdom settle and tranquillize it? Would creating gallowses in the country, would flogging the inhabitants tranquillize the country? Would keeping alive religious dissensions tranquillize the country? Was it to tranquillize this country that those religious dissensions were raised? Who raised

raised them? That Bench (*pointing to the Treasury Bench*), not the men that now sit on it. Where was it first imagined? In England—not in Ireland. The country did not wish to have those distinctions kept alive; they desire only to have their own parliament—they know the value of their constitution. The parliament of Ireland know how to deal with the people of Ireland: and they possess the ability to deal with them.

There is an observation which goes to shew the impossibility of 100 members returned to the united parliament, having any influence in favour of Ireland. In Ireland the law fixes forty days for convening the Parliament. What is the regulation in England? fourteen days only are allowed to call the parliament. Would it be possible, if the Irish members ever returned to this country, and the united parliament was called, for them to attend. It would be utterly impossible, and therefore, where it was wished to carry any measure unfavourable to this country, the members would be excluded from the debate by the impossibility of attending.

A person would believe that the country had got 20 years more forward in the world than it really was; and that the noble Lord had come forward 20 years too soon; and that instead of coming forward now he ought to delay the measure for 20 years longer; to try if in that period it would be the interest of both countries to be identified. His advice to the noble Lord was to postpone the measure for 20 years; and if he came forward at the expiration of that period, he would come forward with more knowledge and experience, and with greater certainty of the ground upon which he goes; and probably he may not then meet with the same difficulty he labours under at present, to persuade the House that he comes forward with the unbiassed unanimous uninfluenced voice of the people in favour of his measure.

On the whole of these Propositions made by the noble Lord, he saw nothing desirous or advantageous to the country: he saw every thing injurious and to be avoided. He could not perceive there was any one, the smallest benefit to arise from them. What had been produced by the noble Lord as benefits, were in trade and revenue.

He would give one decisive answer to all that had been urged.—He then proceeded, “If you would give me all the revenue and trade of England, I would not part with the freedom of my native country. I know of no wealth or trade that ever can exist long or be worth preserving if you have not liberty to let it rest on: it could not remain—it would be a nuisance. The whole measure resolves into this—the question is nothing more than to take away your Parliament. It is not a question of Union or separation, but of Union or British connexion. It is not whether you will have this or that constitution, but will you have a Parliament in Ireland or not? I put it in that light because I can see it in no other. You are to have a civil establishment, you are to have a sovereign king, and in short you are to have your present establishment of government; you are

to have every thing but that in which consists the essence of the whole, and what is that?—A resident Parliament. If this measure was to take place, this country would be a colony on the worst plan, paying contributions and without a Parliament.” He objected to the whole of those measures when he recollected they were to be procured by the most unconstitutional of all means, the loss of the Parliament. He was sorry to hear the intention of purchasing boroughs mentioned in the House, yet that scheme had not been given to the public. He would not charge the present House with bribery and corruption, but would any other House that held out such language as this—“ your Parliament consists of three hundred members: one hundred of them are going to a foreign country. In order to accomplish this you must first sell yourself, and then the boroughs; the money shall be raised on the country that is to be sold; and you who have sold the country shall pocket the money.” Did the noble Lord think that the people of England would ever admit that the boroughs of the country were private property, and were to be bought and sold? Did the noble Lord think that the English nation would not be jealous of one hundred men who will be said to have come out of their own Parliament, after having sold their country, and that they would not believe the same one hundred men would not be ready to sell the other? The great Lord Chatham knew the folly of such a measure; he would not suffer such a measure; he would not suffer an addition to the Commons of England, because it would have made the democracy too great.

He felt regret when he found himself in a minority and on so great and important a question, but he spoke from the bottom of his heart when he said he could never believe that the majority in the Parliament of Ireland when they came to consider seriously of the measure, would go against one hundred and twenty members of the House, having the sense of the country, expressed from every quarter, when they recollected that twenty-five petitions from counties lay on the table of the House; when they recollected that ten or twelve more petitions from towns were also on the table; when they thought of those meetings legally convened from whence the petitions had not yet been received; when they thought of the numbers of petitions at present on the road against the measure; when they felt that the public sentiment was decidedly averse to an Union; he was convinced they would retract the intention of carrying such a measure against the general voice of the nation.

It was said the people of the country were irritated: it might be so, but how has the people of the country been irritated?—Not by the letters stated to have been written with that intention. The letters alluded to were written for the purpose of obtaining the sense of the nation on this measure. Had not every member of the House a right to know the sense of his constituents? Were not meetings refused to be convened by the Sheriffs? Did not the military interfere when those meetings were called in an equally legal manner? And how was the sense of those parts of the country where such interruptions were given to proceed but by letters?—

If the country is irritated it is because this measure is brought forward not only against the sense of the Parliament, but against the sense of the nation. Have not those methods which succeeded in overthrowing the French Monarchy been resorted to in order to overthrow the power of the Irish Parliament? The appeal nominal has been resorted to in order to procure signatures in favour of the measure against the sense of Parliament; and therefore it was, that he meant to conclude his speech; not by negating the resolution, but by moving that the chairman should leave the chair.

Mr. Speaker then concluded, "I am persuaded the House will never pass the Union. I entertain too great an opinion of the sound sense of many gentlemen who have voted for the measure. I am persuaded they have not seen it in its true light. They did not know that if they once adopt it, and afterwards felt they were wrong, that there is no retreat, that they can never mend it: whereas, if the minister will wait until the sense of the nation feels the propriety and the necessity of it, they then will be justified in adopting it. I cannot prevail upon myself to conceive that if any man could be bribed, he would put into his pocket the amount of the bribe he should receive for voting away the Constitution, when he should seriously recollect that by that vote he was undoing his country: it is impossible to believe it. Before the minister leaves this House, I do conjure him to reflect upon what he is doing: to consider the situation into which he is likely to plunge himself and his country, and to bless the hand that saved him. If we are wrong, we are wrong on the safe side, because we are for preserving the Constitution—the other side of the House are for plunging it into a confusion that they know not where it will end, and at the same time assert, that they are doing it a great blessing. I would say a great deal now, but I am exhausted: I shall therefore conclude, Mr. Annesley, by moving that you leave the chair."

LORD CASTLEREAGH.—His Lordship said, that he by no means wondered at the course which the hon. gentleman had pursued in his argument, when he recollected that he had ever asserted his satisfaction and content in the situation of Ireland; that he considered us in a state of health and happiness; that we wanted nothing to better our condition, and that all *was right and well*. If the right hon. gentleman could indeed view with indifference the complicated miseries under which we suffered, and bless the constitution which has produced them, if he can view with calmness and complacency that system of evils and depravities which has spread misfortune and desolation over every part of the island; and if he wishes to continue it as productive of benefit and happiness, surely his heart must be made of uncommon materials; nor can he be sensible to the wretchedness of mankind. It is on this view of things (his consideration that all is well,) that he founds his opposition, and calls aloud upon every description of the people, whether loyalists or traitors, to unite against this measure. And what does he promise us? Ist, that after he has dragged a few years longer through a state of wretched insecurity, he should
leave

leave the country subject to the same contests as before; subject to a renewal of those miseries and struggles which have nearly overwhelmed us in total ruin. He appeals not only to all descriptions of men, but to all sects, and places religion herself in the Anti-Union army. Let them, says he, but oppose the Union, let them defeat this damnable measure, we will then settle all our differences among ourselves. But does he say how he will settle them? does he propose any plan? does he suggest any system? No, he leaves every thing open for a renewal of new mischiefs; for the revival of fresh disorders; for the repetition of a new gradation from jealousy to discontent; from discontent to faction; from faction to conspiracy; from conspiracy to rebellion.

The right hon. gentleman had accused him of using in the last and in the present session contradictory arguments; that last year he had asserted the growing prosperity of Ireland, and this year its poverty and bankruptcy, as grounds to prove the necessity of Union. He begged leave to say he had by no means argued in that manner. He had last year stated all the imperfections, all the anomalies of the constitution; he had stated that they had increased, and that they would increase with the wealth and power of the island; he now stated, that those imperfections and anomalies produced those expences which oppressed us, that they necessitated the continuance of those expences; and those expences, notwithstanding our increase of wealth and power, were such as we could not support. It was upon these principles that he had stated the permanent future expences of Ireland, as beyond her means; he had also shewn the necessity of imperial contribution if we remain separate from Great Britain, and he had shewn, that the result of this double expenditure, for domestic and imperial purposes, will lead us to the verge of bankruptcy. This statement was incontrovertible, and the right hon. gentleman had felt it of so inconvenient a quality, that he had exerted all his great powers to refute it. But he asked the committee whether he really had refuted his statement? What is the line adopted by the right hon. gentleman? He makes an estimate of war expenditure alone, formed on the average of six years, to answer an estimate which was formed on the average of seven years both of peace and war. He forgets, or omits to state, that during the first three years of the war our war expenditure was trifling, and that the want of a greater establishment had nearly produced our entire destruction. He closes his statements with the last year, and leaves out the present year, which is the year of the greatest expence. Is this refutation? He takes a different average, a less number of years, and excludes the year of the greatest expence. Is that refutation? The right hon. gentleman is at a loss to know where to find the expences of the present year: Are not the account, for the first six months on the table? Have not five months of the last half year nearly expired? How then is it difficult to prove the expenditure of that period? He held an account in his hand, calculated to Lady Day, and it proved that the whole expence of the year would

would nearly amount to 6,000,000*l.* and yet this was the sum that the right hon. gentleman had pleased to leave out in his calculations. Upon this year, which the right. hon. gentleman omits entirely, I, (said his lordship,) have grounded my calculations, because we must continue that expence in the ensuing year, and because my argument was prospective; and I looked to the best criterion of our future expence, which I measured by the present. The right hon. gentleman had used another fallacy, he had not continued the expences of peace and war, and argued on the double proportion. He had stated the war expence alone, and said it was in the ratio of nine to one; and he omitted to state what would be our saving in peace, which would have been nearly one-third of our whole expence. The right. hon. gentleman had adverted, but slightly, to the future peace establishment, and seemed to skim over that part of the statement. I have, however shewn, (said his Lordship) that our future peace establishment could not fall short of 1,500,000*l.* a year, and let him impeach that statement if he can. I have shewn that the increase of pay to the army was nearly one-third. I have shewn that the permanent staff of the militia would amount to 120,000*l.* a-year, and that we could not keep up the skeleton of a yeomanry force, which was indispensable, at a less charge than 60,000*l.* Can these charges be avoided? What then becomes of the hon. gentleman's attempts to equalize our revenues and establishments, by lowering the latter beneath reality, and raising the former beyond any possible produce? He would ask the right hon. gentleman himself, whether he would be satisfied on a peace, with an establishment of 12,000 men? He would not. He would be the first to oppose the idea, and therefore all his arguments on the smallness of the future expences in peace, were fallacious. I have alledged and proved, (said his Lordship) that if we continue a separate kingdom, we must have a deficit of 600,000*l.* a-year: I have stated that every year of war would create an additional burthen of 350,000*l.* a-year: that an Imperial contributinn in peace would add 350,000*l.* more, and that if the war continues three years we shall have a deficit of 150,000*l.* a-year, exclusive of any imperial contribution.

But it was asked would Union put down expence? Would Union produce economy? He answered yes—Union would produce tranquillity; Union would increase internal security; Union would establish a general fund for the expences of the Empire, and Ireland could not contribute beyond her proportion. If, said the Noble Lord I did not think Union calculated to produce repose, and confidence, and security, I should consider it as an inadequate measure indeed; but it is my firmest conviction that the first fruit of it will be peace; that peace will lessen our expences; that we shall become as supports to the fabrics of the British empire, and no longer hang upon her as a mill-stone sinking her to the bottom. But how will Great Britain bear the additional expence of supporting Ireland? In the first place, I feel assured that the effect of Union will be to diminish the expences of the empire, and in the second
I assert,

I assert that it is better for Great Britain for a time to spend an additional million, in order to make this a happy country and to consolidate its resources with her own, than that we should continue to support the whole of our own expences in a separate state of insecurity, threatening the existence of the British Empire. The object, the great object of Great Britain is, that the two countries should be one : one in prosperity, in security, in happiness. She is anxious that our wealth should accumulate, when it should be no longer equivocal that our resources would prove resources of the enemy. But she must at present look to our requisitions with jealous anxiety, while she doubts that Ireland would become a store-house and magazine for France.

The hon. gentleman had next endeavoured to impeach the criterion which had been selected, but it was not merely a negative impeachment ; he had not shewn those to be false which he had stated, but complained of the omission of others. He had complained that no criterion had been established from our internal trade : what was the reason ? It was impossible to estimate that trade ; he had himself stated that the value of an Income Tax would form the best possible criterion ; but an Income Tax did not exist in Ireland, and he could not argue from what did not exist.

It was objected that he did not introduce the produce of Stamps in the two countries ; and what was the cause ? The stamp duties were different in the two countries as the rate of duties imposed, and as to the articles on which they were levied ; it was therefore impossible to make a comparison when such difference existed.

His next objection was, that he had omitted the article of Salt : but how could a criterion be established in this article when the duties on salt in Great Britain were 10s. a bushel, the duties on salt in Ireland were 2s. a bushel, and if a comparison were made on the quantity, and not on the value of the article, could that be a fair method when salt was the chief article of the consumption of the poor, and the poor were most numerous in Ireland ?

The third objection was, that he had omitted the Post Office Duties : but how could a comparison be made on this article of revenue, when it was known that the rate of postage was different in the two countries, and a comparison could only be truly made if the rates were the same.

It seemed as if the right hon. gentleman wished to establish criterions from separate proportions of separate articles ; but the real ground he had just taken to establish criterions was this, what quantity of income can any country spend on the different great articles of consumption ? It was the result formed from the value of the whole consumption, which could alone form a true criterion ; a true criterion formed upon a separate article was fallacious, because that article might not be equally relished and proportionably consumed in the two countries.

The right hon. gentleman had concluded that to select the period of common taxation to commence with the extinction of the debts of the two countries, was selecting the period most unfavourable

able to Ireland, but the reverse was the fact. What will be the case, Sir, when Great Britain shall have extinguished her debt? she will have discharged taxes to the amount of twenty millions a year. She will then have merely her ordinary expences to provide for, and of course she will want very few taxes indeed. If, then, Ireland shall commence a system of common taxation with Great Britain when her taxes shall be few and low, the taxes of Ireland being common with Great Britain, will be equally light. In that case the English scale of taxation will descend below the Irish scale of taxation, and Ireland by adopting it will receive a benefit not an injury.

The right hon. gentleman had next objected to the commercial system. It was, however, formed upon the commercial propositions of 1785, which had been supported by the right hon. gentleman, and he defied any fair man to find any principle in these propositions which was not contained in the system before the House. He contended that the present system exceeded in benefit that of 1785, as it communicated the raw materials of England, by taking off all prohibitions, as it transferred to this kingdom the duties on coals, and the half subsidy, and as it was not attended with a contribution arising from the increase of the hereditary revenue. If the propositions of 1785, secured protecting duties so long as the Parliament of Ireland chose, the present system secured them for 20 years, and then left the alteration of them to the wisdom of an Imperial Parliament, in which Ireland would have 100 Members, and when the interests of Ireland must be equally considered with those of Great Britain, because they were the same.

The Right Hon. Gentleman had alluded to the injury which the cotton manufacture would suffer. He had, however, given notice to the House that he intended to make such a provision in favour of that manufacture as ought to satisfy every reasonable man. But did the right hon. gentleman defend the system of the present duties on cottons. Would he assert the policy of maintaining prohibitory duties upon articles of British manufacture? Would he maintain the enormity of such a system which went to punish the consumers of this country, and to lay a ground for Great Britain to retaliate? Was it right or equitable that the consumers in Ireland should be taxed in the articles of calicoes and muslins from 30 or 40 per cent. that a few manufacturers should make ten per cent. profit on those articles? Did he suppose the monstrous principle of prohibitory duties? If the right hon. gentleman had thought it necessary to place the cotton manufactures in a hot-bed in order to make it strike root, surely he did not mean to establish the necessity of continuing such false encouragement. He must surely wish upon every true principle that prohibitory duties shall be gently and gradually lowered, and the support of a contrary system was the support of a solecism, not of a principle.

But the right hon. gentleman has argued, that because an alteration of the proposed Resolutions has been suggested with respect to the duty upon cottons, this circumstance furnished the strongest proof of the necessity for a local Parliament to act upon local information :

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He states, (said his lordship,) that when I was in England on the business of Union, I was ignorant of the state of the cotton manufacture, and that it was merely since I returned, that I obtained information by conversing with the manufacturers themselves. It is hardly worth while to discuss so flimsy an argument: The answer however is plain. The Resolutions which I have presented are drawn upon a general principle; that principle is the reduction of duties on the Trade between Great Britain and Ireland, so that they shall gradually become to each other like two counties of the same kingdom. But I was aware that objections would arise to this principle, as it affected certain manufactures, and I was prepared to adopt such alterations, as upon mature consideration it should be found expedient to adopt. My object was to ascertain and establish a principle, and to allow no variations from it which necessity did not warrant,

With respect to Linens it was now plain even from the admission of the right hon. gentleman, that our local Legislature could not be relied upon to perpetuate advantages which depended on the British Market and the British Parliament. But the right hon. gentleman, said that an Union would not secure those advantages, because it was stipulated in the Propositions of 1785, that Great Britain should ever give a preference to Irish manufactures over foreign, and that the plan before the committee contained no such provision. But such a provision was not necessary in his plan, because the Propositions only gave a preference to Irish Linens over foreign; whereas this plan placed Irish and British Linens on the same footing.—There was a security better than any principle of preference: It was a security founded on the perpetual interest of Great Britain, and of the manufactures of Great Britain. He would now for a moment revert to the right hon. gentleman's wishes about Cottons, and suppose that Great Britain were to feel in a similar manner with the right hon. gentleman as to Linens; suppose Great Britain were to take up the principle of general protecting duties, and adopt that sovereign panacea, which he recommended for Irish manufactures; and suppose she were to lay a duty of ten per cent on Linens, could the hon gentleman object to the fairness of the measure, although it would ruin the Linen Trade of Ireland?

With respect to the Wollen Trade, the hon. gentleman seemed to have changed his doctrine that we were not fit for that manufacture, at the same time that he does not think the importation of British Wool to be of much advantage. But what was the case? Had we not evidence that all the wool of the country was worked up at home into manufacture? Was it not therefore probable, that if we could obtain more wool we should manufacture more? Would it not be an advantage to have the finer kinds of British Wool to mix with our own? Had we not advantages in respect to fuel which were not enjoyed in several parts of England, Where the woollen manufacture was carried on? And was it of no consequence to the country, that a plan was offered them which secured for ever their Linen Trade and opened the prospect of a Trade in Wollens.

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The right hon. gentleman had next objected to the relief offered to the landed interest, in taking off the duties imposed on the export of provisions. He argued the loss of revenue, but surely that, in an arrangement of such a nature was no consideration; and the change of a tax from one article to another could not be deemed an increase of the national burdens. But it was objected that the export duty on provisions was paid by England, not Ireland. Did the right hon. gentleman mean to assert the justice of such a measure? Did he mean to contend that first we should oblige Great Britain to give us the monopoly of her market, and then we should tax her for giving us that monopoly? But supposing the duty was at present paid by Great Britain, the consumer, let it be recollected, that if Great Britain allowed the importation of provisions from other parts, and admitted a free competition, that it would then fall, not upon the consuming, but upon the producing country. So that the export duty on provisions was in one view an unjust tax, and in the other an injurious one.

The right hon. gentleman objected to the loss of revenue in reducing the present duties from $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent to 10 per cent. But what was the case in the Propositions of 1785? Was not the general principle of that measure to confine protecting duties to $10\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. and was not that the system of the right hon. gentleman?—When the right hon. gentleman had stated that all duties which were under 10 per cent. at present were to cease, he had not fairly stated the resolutions, which contained no such provision; they only prevented their increase in future.—How had the right hon. gentleman misstated the regulations respecting coals, in order to inflame the city of Dublin, which he lamented did not require any acts of irritation? It was urged by him that the local tax imposed on coals imported into Dublin, (which by the bye was a tax of his own invention) was to be continued for ever. There was no such regulation in the articles whatever, for their principle was, that the general duties on coals should remain the same, but that such part of the duty, as was now retained in England, and went into the British Exchequer, should hereafter be paid into the Irish Exchequer; but there was no reference to local duties of any kind whatsoever, which might at any time cease when circumstances would allow it.

Again, the right hon. gentleman objected that Great Britain should give up the half subsidy upon foreign and colonial goods re-exported to Ireland, as it would discourage our attempts to carry on a direct trade instead of a circuitous one. Here the hon. gentleman had made a false argument; for the relinquishment of the half subsidy would not alter the quantum of duties, but would merely transfer that part of the duty now paid into the British, into the Irish Exchequer where it might rest.

The right hon. gentleman had ridiculed the idea of our receiving a participation of the revenues received from the territories of the India Company, by stating that this revenue had never been paid. He begged leave, however, to state, that this was not the

case: and he had every reason to believe, that from the flourishing circumstances of the Company, and the great increase of their territories, the Indian contribution would become a permanent and regular resource; and he had been asked whether we were to participate in any further revenues which the British Exchequer should receive at any time from that Company; he was authorized to state, that this kingdom would at all times have its full participation. The right hon. gentleman had endeavoured to shew, that the plan before the Committee could not produce an entire incorporation of identity with Great Britain; but he should recollect, that the circumstances of distinctness which were to remain were temporary, and not inconsistent with unity of government, and that they were admitted for a time, in order to save the interests of Ireland from being in the least impaired. But what was the conduct of opposition? First they contended against any Union at all; and secondly they contended against any thing which fell short of absolute Union and total identity.

The noble Lord said he should reserve his reply to other objections of the Rt. Hon. Gent. to another stage of the discussion. He would now conclude with these observations, that he had attended minutely to all the arguments of the Speaker, and he conceived they might all be refuted, and that nothing had been advanced to shake his opinion as to the necessity of the measure before the Committee: he saw that its adoption would be attended with tranquillity, with economy, with security, and he was convinced that its rejection would leave us open to a renewal of those struggles and calamities which had recently overwhelmed the country, would oblige us to adopt a system of establishment and expence, which the revenues of this country could not support, and would finally terminate in bankruptcy and ruin.

Right hon. Mr. BERESFORD, went also at large into a comparative view of the Propositions of 85, and the present, shewing the superiority of the latter. In the former, most of the old restraints and prohibitions had been retained, while on the present occasion such modifications and arrangements were proposed as would place the commercial intercourse and connexion of the two countries on the most fair and equitable footing. On the subject of subsidizing duties, he explained some objections made by the Speaker—who arose, and professed himself convinced and satisfied on that part of the subject, by the statements of Mr. B.—and among the advantages resulting from a just reciprocity of the raw material, Mr. B. asserted that in the article of English wool, Ireland would benefit one-third in the value by merely returning this article, after being spun, into the British market, without following the manufacture further in its progress.

Mr. DAWSON, said, that he had all along opposed the measure of Union in its principle, and the motive of his opposition stood unchanged. The noble Lord said, when the terms were known, the House and the country would fall in love with the measure; but if there was one plan more monstrous than another, it was the
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specific plan proposed by the noble Lord. After the very trifling majority which the noble Lord had been able to procure—after the great and respectable minority with which he was opposed, he had hoped that the noble Lord instead of prosecuting, would have expressed his relinquishment of the measure; but he was sorry to say, that a confidential Law Officer of the Crown had given that House and the country to understand what they had to expect from the Minister; he had avowed that the measure was to be carried even by a majority of one; but he expressed his confidence, that the Minister would not get the country gentlemen of Ireland to go along with him in such a procedure. In the last session of Parliament, when an unbiassed majority had thrown the measure of Union out of that House, the noble Lord said, that he must be frantic if he attempted to press it; yet, although the opposers of the measure had been augmented from 111 to 118, still the Minister persisted. Could it then be considered a language too strong, if he were to tell the noble Lord that he was not merely frantic, but stark staring mad! The Commons of Ireland were against the measure—[a cry of no!]
—certainly the House was numerically for it; but he contended that the property and unbiassed sense of the Commons of Ireland was adverse to the measure—the country was adverse to it—the mercantile interest against it—[another cry of no] he did not wish to mistake, but there had, in the course of that sitting, been a petition presented on the part of the merchants, &c. of Dublin against an Union, and he was well informed that there was a similar one from the principal traders of Cork, on its way, or by that time received in town. Mr. Dawson then took a slight view of the terms, particularly that part affecting the Irish peerage, and concluded by voting for Mr. Annesley's leaving the chair.

Mr. W. SMITH, said, that when the hon. gentleman who spoke last, had indulged in offensive allusions to those who supported the question of Union, he had uttered that which he would not venture to apply individually; but such a mode of opposition to the question before the House was perfectly appropriate and consistent in the plenipotentiary of the county of Armagh; but in allusions of the kind, he felt, there was nothing worthy a man of sense. The hon. gentleman had expressed himself extremely anxious about the Irish peerage: he too might be allowed some credit for a similar and equally sincere anxiety, but his sentiments on that subject were of a very different nature. The regulations respecting the peerage were mere anomalies, which would by no means alter the essence of their privileges, nor lessen their dignity, but must materially conduce to the benefit of this country. The hon. gentleman while he dwelt on ideal indignity, did not suffer himself at all to consider the positive advantages which his country, of which he professed to be so ardent an advocate, would derive from the regulation—but if the hon. gentleman did not know, or did not chuse to acknowledge those advantages, he, was not insensible to them, nor ignorant that by the regulations which
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the hon. gentleman complained of, a great number of the Irish peerage who could not be admitted to a Legislative influence in the Imperial House of Lords, would have an opportunity of constituting a very great portion of the Commons, and thus of strengthening and maintaining the interests of Ireland in the United Parliament. With respect to the other points of regulation affecting the Peers of Ireland, that august body had consented to sacrifices which would ever be mentioned to their honour—ever remembered with gratitude—and, inasmuch as they had proved themselves superior to personal feeling or vanity, when put in competition with the public good, would communicate a lustre to their characters and names far beyond the power of title or of privilege to bestow; and, if the Commons were equally inclined to forego personal considerations for the general welfare and prosperity of the country, this House would display a different aspect; investive would not be substituted for argument; passion would give way to that calm and dignified consideration which the man of unbiassed mind and patriot feeling would ever give to a public question; and whether the measure proposed were of an injurious or beneficial tendency, would be equally an argument for coolly entering into its merits, with that man who felt he had no other parliamentary interest than the good of his country.

That as the question before the Chair, could properly be debated only on the principle of the measure, and as every thing that could be said to the principle had already been offered to the House, he would be obliged to give a silent vote, or repeat arguments which he had used before, or which had been advanced by gentlemen with whom he had the honor to act. He declared on his honor, that the sentiments which he had expressed on a former occasion, had undergone no other alteration, except a further and stronger confirmation; except in a more settled and increased conviction of the necessity of the measure, and the certainty of great and many benefits resulting to this country, while the strength and resources of the empire would be augmented, and placed on a solid and permanent basis. He hoped he would not appear presumptuous; he was sure that his own mind and intentions would acquit him from the charge; but truly there did not appear to proceed from the other side of the House a single argument that ought to have any influence on the question, but that of increasing in that House the conviction of its necessity and its policy; and it was fair to say, that of this the silence of his side of the House was a proof, for if the Anti-Unionists had offered arguments, they must necessarily have furnished matter for reply. On the contrary, arguments which had been repeatedly controverted, were again pressed forward with not the faintest colouring of novelty, while the weakest arguments offered on his side of the House stood unrefuted. What were all the arguments advanced by gentlemen opposite to him, but changes rung, that the measure of an Union would subvert the constitution? Was that argument for ever to be refused, and for ever to be urged? Gentlemen knew
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very well that it was a position subversive of the best principles of the Constitution; that it was eternizing abuses and defects; that it was stifling the corrective principle, that principle which had so long upheld in purity, and vigour, and happiness, the British constitution; in a word, that it was a position which would take from the Sovereign his Scottish crown; nay, the British crown; and shut out for ever this country from all political improvement.

Government was charged with having appealed to the physical force of the people—but it was not the fact—government appealed to the property and to the respectability of the country. No! it was those who make the charge that incur its application and its guilt—it was the Anti-Unionists who had appealed to the physical force of the country, in the encouragement of mobs, and the promotion of aggregate meetings. Gentlemen contended for the efficacy and the virtues of the present system of connexion—but what was it? One empire with two Legislatures and two Sovereignities; one contending for superiority—agitated by rivalry, and confessing and acting upon a distinction of interests! How did the matter stand? Either the two countries were independent or they were not. If independent, what became of the integrity of the empire, which the Anti-Unionists professed themselves ready to maintain, and if they were not independent, what became of those objections to an Union, founded on national pride and ideal independence? But it was degrading to the understanding of men of sense and information to say that our Legislature being one and the same with that of Great Britain, could either affect our national dignity otherwise than by placing it on a great and honourable foundation, or subvert our Constitution, otherwise than by giving to it purity, strength, and stability.—Was there, said he a man at the other side of the House, who would not feel the strongest sense of indignation if a principle of separation were to be imputed to him? Was there a man who heard him that would not lay down his life to maintain the integrity of the empire? He felt assured there was not. How then, he asked, did an opposition to this measure accord with such feelings and professions—for certainly, if the two countries were to form one empire in the most effectual and stable manner, an Union of Legislatures must incontrovertably be allowed a desideratum.

With respect to the argument, that the proportion of Irish members would not have due weight in the legislative scale, he begged leave to say that the assertion was monstrous and absurd, and in proof that it was so, he begged gentlemen would see to what a length the argument might be carried. What a wretched dependence, what a miserable security for their rights would every separate county or shire of England have; for instance, that of Middlesex sends about twenty members to parliament, and these, according to the argument advanced from the other side, would have to contend with 538 members; a position the most absurd, and which can only be supported by an argument existing only in the present state of separability, and which must vanish the moment

an Union takes place; that is the argument of distinct interests. Never was there said Mr. S. a more wild and absurd estimation of the freedom of the country, than to say that an Union would place Ireland in a dependent state. The fact was, that Ireland would be no more dependent in the scale of the Empire than by that mutual and relative dependance which the parts of a whole must necessarily have on each other; no more dependant than any one of the counties of Ireland was on the entire kingdom. It was not on a contrast of the number of members that depended the security of either country, but on an identification of their interests, an identification which an Union would effect. It was asked what grand benefit would result from an Union? Although several might be detailed he would content himself with mentioning the most obvious and fundamental one, that of its being an indissoluble strengthening of the connexion between the two countries. It might be answered that they were already strengthened by an Union of Crowns; true, they were so, but an Union of Legislatures would strengthen them still more, and therefore that which would encrease an admitted good; that which would strengthen a cherished and approved principle, had certainly every argument in its favour, none against it. After some further argumentative matter, Mr. Smith concluded by voting against the motion.

Mr. EGAN—At this late hour of the night; morning I mean, I must take the liberty of delivering my sentiments on this question. Enervated as I am, and as you Mr. *Annesly*, cannot but perceive, I can only congratulate myself and the House that in the course of my life I never wrote a pamphlet on any subject; and I do therefore congratulate the House that they shall neither have the blade bone nor the haff of any pamphlet of mine served up. But, Sir, you are not to have all my congratulations, I must keep a certain portion for myself; and I felicitate myself that if I have an enemy in this House, who considers me as his, though he should exclaim in the bitterness of his heart, "O! that mine enemy had written a book!" he can only wish it, he cannot say I did it. He cannot get up and charge me with having, in the 32d page of my pamphlet, made an assertion, which in the 111th page of the same work, I expressly contradicted.

Three gentlemen have started this night from the losing post against the honourable gentleman who has so seldom an opportunity of speaking. They have attempted to cry him down, and the only way they had to do that, puts me in mind of the manner in which a Scotchman once undertook to cry down Homer; he said he would get some poor scholar like Mc. Pherson to translate him.

The noble Lord who first got up to answer that honourable gentleman, first claims my attention. The noble Lord has been pleased to say on a former occasion; if it did not come from the noble Lord it certainly came from that side of the House, that there was not a man in this land who was not a direct rebel, or a man of equivocal loyalty that did not support the measure of an Union. Let me tell you, the men I take to be rebels, and with whom I don't associate—
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Shall I step out of the House to get a character more transcendent? No, Sir, I can lay my finger on him. A man whose weighty and irresistible arguments, the light infantry from the other side have been unable to bear down; that man, Sir, who has been and continues to be the best support of his Majesty's government in this kingdom, and whose whole life has been honourably and serviceably divided between his King, his Country, and the Constitution. Shall I go to the other House of Parliament to look for those men of equivocal loyalty who oppose the Union? If I do, Sir, I shall see there a noble Lord, your old friend, Mr. Annesley, and the friend of his King and the Constitution, whose amiable manners and whose solid virtues make him illustrious as a Peer, and beloved as a man; in whose pure and antient escutcheon no blot can be found, and shall I be told that I am in bad company when I am in his company? And shall I see that great and illustrious character, marked by his Sovereign as a father, that man who has distinguished himself for his attachment to the Constitution of his country, by false representations dismissed from an honour which he disregards but as it served to evince his loyalty, and the crime of disloyalty imputed to him because on this great and momentous question, he was a friend to his King and not a traitor to his country? And is this the measure and the means that is to recommend this unfortunate, this corrupt, this apostate measure that is to annihilate us for ever, that is not to leave to mark the spot where the Irish Patriot expired with the name of his country.

It has been imputed to this House that we get into nothing but infamous invective, contrary to the decorum of Parliament; from what mouth do I hear that imputation? From one that is reeking with the foulest and most abominable invective. Has not the dignified and the venerated name of Charlemont been traduced? I thought veneration for the dead ought to have gained esteem for the living. They ought to be afraid that the hallowed shade of that venerated and departed patriot was about the House. They ought to have been afraid that he would have descended in the majesty of honesty and honour and integrity, and have extinguished the ludicrous inconsistency of audacity and corruption.

I have this night heard a gentleman make a speech which I admire, and much reason I have to admire the speech; a speech which, no doubt, possesses every quality to excite admiration, since it has been made no less than three times in and out of Parliament; but though my talents are but very humble, if gentlemen will be good enough to draw on me at 31 days sight, I think, by getting up at four o'clock in the morning, I could snatch as much time from my business in this House and out of this House, as would enable me, with the friendly assistance of a cup of strong tea or coffee, to clear my understanding, to write 31 or 32 pages of a pamphlet or speech, or speech and pamphlet occasionally, as it may serve my purpose, and give a good solid answer to any question. Probably I have been too long speaking. I know some gentlemen on the other side of the House conceive so; but while I am on my legs, as I pre-

tend to some degree of prophetic spirit, and as I did pay great attention to every word that fell from the hon. gentleman under me (the Speaker), and convinced as I am that the noble Lord will carry the Union by hook or by crook, as we lawyers say; and as this is probably the last time I may ever speak in this House on the subject, I am determined to take my distributive share of the time that is yet left to us. Let the gentlemen on the other side take a nap if they do not wish to hear my last nonsense. If they were to continue the debate, and you Mr. Annesley were to sit in that chair until the day of judgment, and were to look as well on that day as you do now, I would deliver my sentiments. But as probably you would rather leave the chair, and may not be altogether as indifferent on this head as I am, and as you may not wish to be stuck up there until dooms-day, I shall vote for your quitting the chair, and when you do, I most earnestly hope that it is the last time any man may be put into it for the same purpose. Mr. Annesley, I have read books, and, I am afraid, of the worst character. I have read Locke on Civil Government; a bad man that supported by his writings the principles of the revolution in 1688; and another writer, I forget his name, who wrote at the period of the revolution, the principles of which are now-a-days considered so exploded and blasphemous; and what does he say, Mr. Annesley?—Why, Sir, it is this, that if a man wants to write down a good character, it is only necessary to call him bad names, for it is the nature of man to relish such attacks, and he is sure to have the multitude at his side. It puts me in mind of the bad company I have got into, I think it was a faction they called it. Is not the honour of private life, the most unblemished virtues of public life, the most venerated character to become a shield against the attacks of political fanatics? Shall we be told, that no man has a right to hold out the shield of his private character against the deadly weapon? Shall a creature of yesterday—shall we be told by a man whose family was not known, when that man was rocking in the cradle of honour—shall he assume to himself an authority which he disgraces.—(Order! Order!)

Mr. ANNESLEY requested Mr. Egan to speak to the question.

Mr. EGAN—I thought, Mr. Annesley, they had left you so fixed that it was impossible for you to rise to call me to order. (Chair! Chair!) I do not think I am out of order. The question before the House is, that you leave the chair; and if I am speaking to the question, must it be only by rote like a parrot, and must my whole argument be reduced to “*Sir, you are to leave the Chair—Sir, you are to leave the Chair—Sir, you are to leave the Chair?*”—No, Sir, I am endeavouring to assign my reasons why you should leave that chair. What is the accusation made against this House? That it is a base, rebellious, and corrupt, Parliament, and ought to be abolished, and in the abolition of our Parliament ought to substitute an Union. What else has been asserted?—that history proves for six hundred years past, that we have been a despicable nation, and that every successive government has been obliged to govern us with despotism.

despotism. You have been told that for half a million of guineas the country would extinguish itself.

I have had the satisfaction, when a right hon. gentleman exposed the fallacy of those calculations which have been laid before the House. To hear him utter a sentiment to which every man who loves his country must subscribe, said that right hon. gentleman "If you were to give me the trade and commerce of England, I would not part with the Parliament. If you could even realize the phantom of those calculations, I would not for these rob my country of its Parliament." What is honour to a man? What is chastity to a woman? What is dignity to a country? Sir, they are synonymous terms, and those who could bargain for their surrender, as they must be insensible of their value, must be undeserving of their possession, and never had them to sell. They talk of riches, there are no compensation for servitude. Sir, we have no right to dispose of our country; I care not what Blackstone and Sommers, those English lawyers, may say; I will not argue against the ramrod impotence of the other side of the House, but I will record on my commentaries that you have no right to sacrifice your country. It is a delegation which at the end of seven years or sooner, we are bound to return as it was committed to our care. We have no right to surrender the Parliament of Ireland to a foreign power. I call it a foreign land. It has been stated in this and the other House that I said England was the instinctive enemy of this country, I say so still, the propositions which are to be the ground-work of the Union prove it. The propositions of 82 prove it. The commercial restraint of Ireland prove, that England is our jealous enemy in commerce; and therefore I said it. We should not trust that country with our rights, and above all with our Constitution.

We are told that we must submit to this Union, because if we do not, in three years we will be irrevocably a bankrupt nation: we are to be bankrupt and that is declared by the very men who are to issue the commission. In the administration of Lord North, very strong assertions of that kind were made, and yet not one of those assertions were ever realized. And as I knew that noble Lord to be a man of sense, and as I know the men who made this observation now is not of a mind to think long enough to be certain of the event, I will therefore vote against an Union. Mr. Egan here went into the propositions laid down relative to the savings in peace and war, and having observed upon them at considerable length, said, if nothing else would influence him, those calculations alone would determine him to vote against the Union. He then concluded, "I cannot sit down without repeating what I mentioned when this business was last brought forward, when the noble Lord mentioned the subject of compensation for the boroughs; I did tell the noble Lord very fairly, that if I ever heard it again mentioned, I would take down his words, and would either vote his impeachment or expulsion. And do I now declare, if this House is not hastily taken away, if some abler man than I am does not do it, I will myself do it, though I should stand alone.

Mr. BURROWS.—I should feel myself unworthy of a seat in this House if I apologized, even at this late hour, and to this exhausted assembly, for speaking with the utmost freedom upon this vital question. The approach of dissolution is a season peculiarly fit for truth and seriousness, and if mischief shall arise from a free disclosure to public view of the circumstances in which we stand, they alone are answerable, who by setting this question afloat; have torn the veil from objects which cannot bear, and ought not to be submitted to public scrutiny. I own this measure has not taken me by surprise. I have long anticipated it in the preparatory steps of your government, and I have many friends who may recollect that I told them many years hence, that the solemn engagement by which the members of the Whig Club (an institution, to which I had not the honour to belong) pledged themselves against an Union, was of more real value than all the other comparatively trifling objects, about which they were occupied. The advocates for an Union must admit two propositions: that an independent domestic legislature is, generally speaking, a good, and that our independent constitution has worked well. I do not exaggerate when I say, that Ireland has more improved since 1782, than any nation that ever existed, within so short a period. Sir, if we were not eye-witnesses of our own advancement, it would strike us with astonishment. To any man who could put Ireland, as in 1782, in juxtaposition with Ireland in her present state, as to population, wealth, agriculture, and commerce, the difference would appear so astonishing as to be scarcely ascribable to natural causes and natural means. I am, therefore, well founded in saying, that the evils flowing from our Independence must be weighty and manifest indeed, to justify a surrender of our Constitution. To those who say that it does not subvert our Constitution, because we will still have our Representatives in the United Parliament, I shall only answer, that upon the same grounds of reasoning, if we were to send deputies to the United Assembly of France, that Assembly so intermixed might be called our Representatives, and we should just as much become thereby sovereigns of France, as we shall become (as a right hon. gentleman has told us) sharers of the sovereignty of England. To any man who agrees with me in deeming it essential to our constitutional liberties, to be legislated for and taxed by those deputies *alone* who are chosen by Irishmen, and that residence in Ireland is also an essential quality of our Constitution, it is unnecessary to prove this to be an essential change. No man can doubt that this act virtually and in fact re-established British supremacy. An hon. friend of mine (Mr. Smyth) has said that all our positions on this side of the House are unfounded, and all his own self-evident; and therefore I presume it is, that he has not condescended to refute the former or prove the latter: he appears to me to have assumed two fatal fallacies, and to have built his whole reasoning upon them. He says, legislative independence necessarily tends to separation, and that an Union of Parliaments necessarily creates an identity of feelings and interests in the two nations; how these effects are to follow he has not pointed,

pointed, nor can I conceive. As long as the Crown, the source of active power, are united in one family, resident in Great Britain, and as long as the same king continues an integral part of each legislature, separation appears to me to be impossible; the consolidation of the prerogatives of the two Crowns forms an anchor to the Constitution of such immoveable weight, as to be proof against all the storms and surges of democracy. In the same manner that the royal negative protects the prerogative, does the union of the crowns preserve the connexion of the countries; this at least is undeniable; it cannot be dreaded that the countries will be separated by any legislative act; the King of Great Britain never can be supposed to concur in such act. It appears to me that the same ingenuity which infers such imbecility of connexion from independent legislatures, could, with equal ease, and equal strength, prove that the separate estates of Parliament are inconsistent with the security of the prerogative, and that, to preserve the executive, you must invest it with the whole legislative power.

The danger then to connexion from independence must be extrinsic and operate from without. Will the People of Ireland be better affected to a Parliament in Westminster than to a Parliament in Dublin? Will they prize the Constitution more after they have been compelled to sacrifice their liberties to it, than while they were suffered to think that they might be connected with Great Britain without being enslaved? as far as it depends upon the feelings of Irishmen, and abstracted from the operations of military despotism, which cannot last, in my opinion the principle of connexion will perish with our independence. It has been said that Parliamentary debates excite sedition—perhaps they may at times be intemperate; and I know of nothing human that is perfect. But I contend that considerable advantages arise even out of the abuses of our Parliamentary institution. Even in the most despotic governments the exterior forms and symbols of authority are necessary to create respect, and attach the feelings and prejudices of the vulgar to the power to which they are bound to submit. He knows not the nature of our Constitution!—he knows not human nature, who cannot see much benefit resulting from that chair, from the very robes in which our venerable President is clad, from the splendid dome under which we deliberate, from the very bustle and tumult of this assembly, and even from those conflicts which in certain respects we may have occasion to lament. You cannot banish the political sentiment from the human mind, and if it has not a domestic and constitutional want, it will be the more bold, visionary, and enterprising. Therefore it is, that I always conceived that an opposition, though it verged to faction, was extremely desirable in our Constitution; and if I were to attempt to connect our late popular excesses with the proceedings of this House, I would say that they were more promoted by our acquiescence than by our opposition to the measures of government, and if our debates had been more frequent and more impassioned, Jacobinism would have been less prevalent without these doors. But I cannot avoid observing how unreasonable

able it is to contrast our independence with British connexion, at the very moment that the latter probably owes its existence to the former. The noble Lord has said that the suppression of the rebellion is to be ascribed chiefly to the vigor of government! but I say that the vigor of government would not have availed, if it had not been strengthened by an internal legislature, and that both united would have failed, but for the yeomanry of Ireland fighting under the obligation of a solemn oath to maintain the Constitution of Ireland, and feeling that they were struggling for their own liberties, and the rights of their posterity—in that contest almost the whole property of Ireland was anti-revolutionary; but if it was conceived that we struggled against one revolutionary party, but to promote the long projected Union of another not less odious! The conduct of the yeomanry and the issue of that conflict might have been widely different.

My learned friend's second assumption, namely, that identity of interest and feeling, will necessarily follow parliamentary Union, is totally unproved, and even less tenable than the former. Can he conceive, that a Legislative Union between England and France, leaving a vast preponderance of power with the latter country, would identify the interests and feelings of both? Could he even hope that the ancient hostilities between those countries would gradually subside, under such an arrangement? I do not say that the case is the same, but it is illustrative. Two distinct countries cannot incorporate with any safety to the inferior, unless an identity of interest and of feeling, shall have preceded the incorporation. The Unionists seek that as an effect, which is necessary to their measure as a pre-existing cause. They cannot deny that the British portion of the legislature will be absolute; but they contend that the new relation of identity of people will secure us against an abuse of power. If they will prove it to me that there is such a pre disposition in the two countries; if they satisfy me that Ireland will stand towards England like Yorkshire or Cornwall or any other English county, I shall acknowledge my error and embrace their project; but I cannot forget history, and overlook the natural course of human affairs out of compliment to their speculations. My honourable friend is quite indignant that we at this side of the House should dwell upon the past oppressions of Great Britain, which even the Minister acknowledges, and condemns. I answer, that however goading the detail of British oppression may be, it is rendered necessary by the attempt to reduce us again to the state under which we languished for centuries. For centuries we were considered as a distinct people and treated as an abject province, insulted, impoverished and degraded by British legislation. In 1782, we threw off the yoke, and in 18 years made advances unparalleled in the history of any other country; yet we are now called upon to lay down the constitution under which we flourished, and submit to that supremacy by which we were scourged—and to induce us to commit this folly, we are told that the ancient feelings of Great Britain will at once vanish and

and that we will be precisely in the situation of an English county. Sir, I would as soon believe that my honourable friend could with his breath cool the earth heated by the collected rays of a long summer's sun, which evaporate as slowly as they accumulate, as that the prejudices of centuries would give way to the mere influence of a name. Why is Yorkshire safe and free with but two votes in the British Parliament? Why is Manchester safe without any? Because there is no contrasted interest or contrasted feeling between these places and Britain at large, and if there was a competition between Yorkshire and any other English county, the residue of Great Britain would form an impartial umpire between them. But can any man deny that rival feelings exist and that rival questions may spring up between Great Britain and Ireland? Can any man doubt but that an Englishman will look at Ireland, and an Irishman at England as a distinct country, even though they should be commanded by an act of Parliament to consider the two islands as one and the same. I say that Ireland with its hundred intermixed members, can have less chance against British prejudice than even under its constitution before 1782, and the claims of any single county of England must for ever prevail against Ireland, because, the residue of England will in future, as in past time lean against us, and we never will be considered and treated as Englishmen. To compare Ireland with Yorkshire, is to confound things widely different—if, indeed, England were surrounded by ten or a dozen such islands as Ireland, and if the representatives of all these inferior islands united, should exceed the representatives of England as much as the representatives of England exceed any one of them, then a situation analogous to the counties of England would arise, and the influence of England might be overborne by combinations. But it astonishes me, that gentlemen do not see, that the very idea of terms and conditions necessarily implies future, as well as past distinctness, and amounts to an admission that our 100 members merged in the British parliament, are totally inadequate to secure justice for Ireland—when to the considerations I have stated, I take into account the hostile feelings generated by this foul attempt by bribery, by treason and by force, to plunder a nation of its liberties in the hour of its distress—I do not hesitate to pronounce, that every sentiment of affection for Great Britain will perish, if this measure shall pass, and that instead of uniting the nations, it will be the commencement for an æra of unextinguishable animosity.

The surrender of our constitution is urged upon another ground, if possible more strong than any I have stated—namely, our religious dissensions; I admit the existence of this toil, and I pant for its removal—but before I embrace so desperate a remedy, I desire to be instructed how, and by what process it will operate? In producing the effort ascribed to it. It is not reasonable that upon the mere word of the Minister, I should apply this deadly medicine to a disease, which for many years has been abating, and which, I suspect, has been kept lingering amongst us for the sake of the remedy.

medy. It is a moral malady and must be removed by moral means. Will an Union extract the poison from those tenets which inflame religious bigotry?—Or will it diffuse charity and toleration through the land?—Will it alter an iota in any man's creed, or in his practice? Will it quench Catholic ambition, or allay the spirit of Protestant monopoly? The Minister answers those enquiries by a metaphysical quibble; says he, the Catholic out-numbering the Protestant, feels his claim to political equality, founded in manifest justice, and presses forward for its attainment. The Protestant, from his inferiority, dreads that equality would lead to ascendancy, and therefore opposes Catholic claims. But pass an Union and instantly as it were the effect of magic, we will be one people. The protestant therefore, in the Empire will out-number the Catholic, and consequently Catholic Emancipation can be withheld without injustice or conceded without danger. Now I appeal to common sense of any plain man, will the feelings of the Irish Catholic acquiesce in this sophistry? Will he feel his proportion or his natural claims varied any more by a consideration of the Protestants in England, than of the Catholics in Spain? Will he not still feel Ireland to be his country, and if his relative number gives him any title to a participation of political power, which the argument seems to admit, will that title be diminished when the principal Protestants of Ireland shall become absentees? Or will he become the better attached to the connexion, because the political power of his country is transferred to England for the very purpose of extinguishing his hopes for ever? He cannot forget that he owes the repeal of every political restraint but one, to an Irish parliament, and that that one was originally imposed upon him by that very parliament to which we are called upon to transfer our supreme authority, so that the natural effect of this measure will be to superad national to religious prejudices; to split our inhabitants into Protestants who will be considered as mere English, and Catholics who will be considered as mere Irish, and who will therefore be the more disposed to look to connexion with some other nation, where this metaphysical comparison will not operate, to their degradation.

But suppose the Minister shall change what I understand to be his immutable purpose, and admit them into the Imperial parliament, let it not be credited, that even so the nation will be tranquillized. I admit that when all are prostrate, none can be ascendant; but I add, that no numerous description of men here will be satisfied. I deny that the Minister hopes or desires by this arrangement to bury all religious distinctions in the tomb of Irish independence; he will still play party against party, seat against seat. The revenue and the magistracy, which he may parcel out to-day amongst the Protestants, and to-morrow amongst the Catholics, will he hopes, keep us divided, enfeebled, and degraded. Our political power will be nothing, and any transitory authority which may be held or exercised by any description of us, will depend upon the mere will and caprice of the Minister---this is a condition to which no class of Irishmen will voluntarily submit.

Mr. G. PONSONBY said that the noble Lord (Castlereagh) when this measure of Union was reprobated as a measure of finance, and merely for the purpose of giving to the British Minister a dominion over the Irish House, had triumphantly said, that instead of encreasing, it would lessen the contribution of Ireland; yet this night the noble Lord was pleased to say that such was the state of the country that it could not go on without Union, or paying a contribution to England? Could, then, the noble Lord say, that it was not a measure of finance? The noble Lord professed that an Union would consolidate the strength of the empire, but what, said Mr. Ponsonby, can consolidate the strength and encrease the resources of a country? Not mere Acts of Parliament, but the affections of the people. The noble Lord said that the measure was opposed by every man who was a rebel; then it was clear it could not conciliate the rebellious and disloyal—would a measure which was to lay at rest the question of their emancipation, be calculated to please the Catholics?—Certainly not. Were the Protestants attached to it?—The petitions which covered the table furnished sufficient proof of the contrary; and as to the Presbyterian part of the community, a measure which went to destroy the democratic part of the Constitution, which diminished the Representative body two-thirds, could not be hoped to receive their support or approbation. Here, then, said Mr. Ponsonby, is a measure, which, by irritating all classes of the public, was to consolidate the strength and encrease the resources of the country. The noble Lord speaks of advantages to be acceded to this country in consequence of an Union—why, Sir, said Mr. Ponsonby, these advantages have been promised long before this Union was spoken of: but, says the noble Lord, you have no right to them without you contribute—let the noble Lord propose his rate of contribution and we will agree to it. (A cry of hear! hear! from the Opposition side of the House.) But, Sir, we will not surrender our resident Parliament to the noble Lord. We will not transfer to another country the trust reposed in us by the Irish People. Much has been said, Sir, from the other side of the House, of Catholic claims, and the sentiments of that body with respect to the Union; but who, Mr. Annesley, have set up those gentlemen as the proxies of the Catholics? Has one petition come from that body, praying this House to destroy itself? No, Sir, on the contrary, the Catholics of Ireland are against the measure—(a cry of no! no! from the opposite side of the House)—and I am confident, added Mr. Ponsonby, that the Catholics of Ireland would be satisfied never to come before this House with a claim, rather than assent to this measure, which would leave this country a province, ruled by a military government. Mr. Ponsonby concluded by professing that he opposed the measure as destructive of public liberty in both countries.

Mr. P. HUTCHINSON defended the measure of Union, and declared the sentiments of the Catholics to be favourable to that measure.

Sir BOYLE ROCHE.—Mr. Speaker, I wish for your indulgence and that of the House, while I explain as briefly as I can, my motives for voting upon this important question. In the first place, I am sorry to have it to say, that the late rebellion broke out in this country with marks of atrocity unequalled perhaps in the history of mankind. The Jacobin traitors at the head of it, held out the lives and properties of the best people in this kingdom, as inducements to the lower orders to engage in the rebellion; and if I have not been ill informed, nine-tenths of the people in this country were concerned in it. In this situation, Sir, I think it necessary for the salvation of the country, that some step should be taken to reconcile the people to the government. I have often stated in this House that we could not go on as we are, and that the same kind of government which we lived under for a century past, could not do for us in the present situation we are in. It is true, Sir, that a respectable gentleman, not now in his place, did in the latter end of the last Parliament, I think it was on the night the North of Ireland was declared to be in a state of rebellion, he did propose Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation as the *Paracea* to cure us of all our evils; I was one of those who thought the remedy worse than the disease, and the true friends of the people in Parliament rejected it with scorn. From the time that Lord Westmoreland came here as Chief Governor, one continued system of abuse of Parliament was carried on by the gentlemen alluded to; and as Parliament was held up in an odious light to the people, it had the effect of bringing forward the rebellion immediately. This unfortunate business succeeded as the managers of it expected—to wit—the disuniting all orders of the people so much, that his Majesty's troops in every part of the kingdom were mostly employed in preventing the different orders of the people from murdering one another. This is one of my reasons for voting for a Legislative Union with the sister kingdom, as the only means of securing our lives and properties. Near two years are past since the rebellion broke out, yet there is no gentleman can live at his country seat but at the risk of his life, and every symptom of disorder appears through every part of the kingdom. Every honest man must look steadily to the precarious state of the Protestant establishment of this country; its overthrow has been the great object of the rebellion. The population of this country is made up of two violent sects, I mean Catholics and Presbyterians; they are both hereditary enemies to one another, and they could agree in no point but the overthrow of the established church; and had they succeeded in their attempt upon it, *Peter* and *John* would bleed one another plentifully for the chair. It appears to me, that an Union upon fair, honourable, and equal terms with the Protestant kingdom of England, would put the church of Ireland for ever out of the power of its enemy. In the state we are now in, it is there we must look for permanent security for our religion, for our lives and property. From the beginning I saw in this contest the pride of the few militating against the interest of the many; for I do rely on it, that sharing in the

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the trade, manufactory, and civilization of Great Britain, should be the pride of every honest Irishman. In short, I think, that every honest and loyal Irishman should glory in calling the fleet of England his countrymen. There it is where we ought to feel our true independence. The word independence has been the constant theme of declamation in this country. But where are our own fleets and armies to maintain it, without which it is a nullity? Do we send our ambassadors to foreign courts? No. Have we any thing to say upon the great question of war or peace? No. Where, then, is to be found our independence? It must be in a firm and established Union with our sister kingdom. There has been a great deal said upon the subject of petitions and addresses from different parts of the kingdom; and it has been loudly declared in this House as the voice of the people. Now, Sir, if what I asserted be a fact, that nine-tenths of the people have been concerned in the last rebellion, that being the case, I give but very little credit indeed to the signature of aggregate meetings, brought together by designing people, for the purpose of creating disturbances in the kingdom.—For my part, I rely upon it, that the great property of this kingdom is in favour of an Union, and these are the people whose consent is absolutely necessary upon this occasion. The calm and dignified proceedings of the House of Lords, is a proof of what I have said. A great part of the power and property of the nation reside there, yet there is scarcely any difference of opinion in that House. All these things considered, I vote for the Speaker's leaving the chair.

Mr. WILLIAM JOHNSON said, that so much of personal character had entered into the present discussion, that he was sure he would be forgiven if he took up the time of the House for a few seconds in making some observations on what had been urged on this head: and first, he said, he would take notice of that indiscriminate censure which had been so lavishly thrown upon the supporters of this measure by the gentlemen on the other side of the House. He looked through the rows which he saw before him, he looked to the individuals by whom he was surrounded, and he saw nothing that could warrant that assumption of superiority which had been asserted on this occasion. Whether he divided human pretensions into property, talents, or virtue, he found in his estimation of all those things, sufficient to call for more modesty and discretion than had yet been found in the gentlemen at the other side; for himself he trampled under foot, with mingled contempt and indignation, the slanderous assertion that no man could support an Union that was not bought by the minister. The man who utters this, be he whom he may, he knows that what he utters is not true, or if he imagines it for a moment to be so, he draws on his own head the calumny, and gives the whisperings of his conscience for the conviction of his understanding. Has the head of perhaps the first monied house in Europe, who delivered his sentiments in this House some time since in favour of an Union with so much wisdom and dignity, has he been bribed by the minister? have the Chief Judges of the land been bought by the minister? have, in fine, the

united Peerage of the land been bought by the minister? Has the extended property within and without these walls which is now in favour of this measure, been bought by the minister? No, Sir; but I will tell you what has bought them—the state of the country and the state of Europe. What has bought them has bought me; unacquainted with the minister, the castle, or its followers, I took up the question of an Incorporate Union; I took it up in the bosom of privacy and retirement; it was forced on me by the growing calamities of the country, and I deliberated on it uninfluenced by a single motive, other than an anxious desire to meet the peculiar evils by which we were afflicted—I gave my opinion to the public with freedom, but I trust without arrogance; for this I know some individuals have presumed to censure me; but, I thank God, that while I feel the approbation of my own mind, such things “pass by me as the idle wind which I regard not.”—When I see such men who have thus presumed to censure *me*, cultivate with assiduous adulation characters, who not long since were deemed almost pestilential, I am satisfied; I am glad that I have escaped their good opinion, if I possessed it, and I feel, as it were, a refuge in their enmity, if I have excited it; I turn from them to those by whom I am still countenanced and supported. I know numbers of men of retired habits but enquiring minds, above the storms of the world, but making all their movements where situation and temper place them beyond temptation or delusion, who go the full length that I do upon the present question; I could mention the names of some sufficient to silence, if any thing could silence, the idle declamation to which we have been condemned to listen.

But, Sir, I proceed to the question before the House: The consideration of an Incorporate Union between this country and Great Britain, has been recommended to the consideration of this House by the third and highest branch of the Legislature: thus recommended, it is at least entitled to discussion, and I enter upon it with an anxious and solemn impression of its high importance to our welfare as a nation; Sir, I shall not stop at the question which has been made in this case, whether the settlement of 1782 was final or not? I consider it an idle and utterly irrelevant dispute, which may exercise ingenuity, but which can never forward or impede the adoption of an Incorporate Union. I will consider the question of Union merely on the ground of national utility, all other views of it are, in my mind, an idle waste of speculation, which can never enable us to form a right judgment upon it; to judge of its utility, we must consider it as it relates to, or may affect those interests which are the great leading interests of every community—Constitution, internal quiet, trade, and commerce. I put constitution first, as it is the parent and spring of all national good or evil, and because I am of opinion that all further inquiry upon the subject will be useless, if our condition in this respect be not improved by an Union. Sir, I have been all my life a lover of civil liberty—I never yet set commerce in competition with Constitution. I would prefer the freedom of the latter, to all the riches, even if realized,
which

which ever floated in the dreams of avarice, With this impression on my mind, I have ever considered the settlement of 1782. To that abortive attempt to give us independence, I attribute much of the evils with which we have been afflicted. I shall examine it a little in detail. There is one thing which I consider essential to liberty, in all governments like ours: it is that the executive authority should reside within the sphere of legislative controul; I mean that the territory over which the power of each extends, should be commensurate. If the executive of one country reside in another, within which the legislature of the first can exercise no manner of controul, but is deprived of all those leading securities which it ought to have for the due administration of its affairs; the immediate Ministers of the Crown by whom it will be advised and digested, being necessary attendants upon the person of the Sovereign, are discharged from all effectual responsibility to the Legislature of the country which they thus govern at their discretion. But the case will be still worse if the Executive Authority not only reside in a country to which legislative controul does not extend, but if the existence of that Executive Authority both as to the hands in which it shall be placed, and every modification of its powers, be utterly and by express provision of law, beyond the influence or controul of the Legislature of that country over which it presides. Now, Sir, such is precisely the state of this kingdom, under its present Constitution. I am speaking of the Constitution as settled in 1782, which, it is now contended, places us on a perfect equality with a British subject, as to constitutional liberty. The settlement in 1782 left the connexion of the countries, through the medium of a common Executive, precisely as it had been before; that is, it left this kingdom of Ireland annexed and united to the Imperial Crown of England, and justly and rightly *depending* upon, belonging and united to the same for ever. This provision placed to all perpetuity the Executive Authority of Ireland in the same hands which should wield the Executive Authority of England. And further to secure a similar extent of power to the Executive here, which should be enjoyed by the Executive in England, we have enacted, "That the Kings and Queens of England, by undoubted right, are Kings and Queens of this realm, and ought to enjoy the state, title, majesty, power, pre-eminence, jurisdiction, prerogative and authority of Kings and Queens of the same." This mode of connexion by the absolute surrender of the Executive Authority of this kingdom to the Executive Authority of another country, and thereby to the Legislature of that country, as it existed before the settlement of 1782, so it was left untouched by that settlement. That settlement did not more than secure the theoretic independence of our Legislature, and provide, in a great degree, as I shall shew before I sit down, for its practical subjection. Let me here, however, observe, that I cast no blame upon the settlement of 1782, or the framers of it, from the imperfections as to constitutional liberty, which I shall shew to have resulted from it. Sir, they all avow, from the *impracticable* attempt to give a free Constitution to Ireland, and at the same

same time to preserve the connexion of the two countries through the medium of a common Executive, and the operation of distinct Legislatures, the impracticable attempt to secure *connexion* and preserve *distinctness*. For the sake of the former we give up all controul as to the appointment and modification of our own Executive Authority and have committed that controul and modification, without reserve, to the discretion of a foreign Legislature; and for the sake of the latter, we declare the utter incompetence of any power under Heaven to legislate for us, except the King, Lords, and Commons of Ireland. The constitutional principles endeavoured to be confirmed by the settlement of 1782, and under the operation of which the two countries were therefore to be governed, were a common Executive presiding over the whole, with a distinct and independent Legislatures for each of the two countries, and thus constituting two absolute Sovereignities in one empire. The great difficulty lay in establishing those constitutional principles, and at the same time securing the permanent connexion between the two countries; and indeed, this difficulty is so great, that I have no hesitation in pronouncing it be practically impossible; I have no hesitation in saying, if Ireland were as practically independent of Great Britain as this theory supposes, the connexion could not last a single day. Such must also have been the opinions of those who effected the settlement of 1782, for amid all their ardour for Irish independence, they have endeavoured to secure the connexion by provisions and regulations, which induce of necessity a real practical subjection. I do not blame them for this; there are but two ways in which Ireland can ever be strictly independent--Separation or Union. Now, Sir, as every country naturally labours after independence, and will in the end succeed if she has strength and means; it follows, that Union is the only security we have against Separation; and if I ever could be tempted to wish for the latter, it would be in despair of the former. The settlement of 1782, endeavoured to steer a middle course between Union and Separation, and like all political compromise, missed the good it sought to obtain, and fell into the evil it wished to avoid; it laid the seeds of separation, in endeavouring to secure connexion; and in the pursuit of theoretic independence, it effected a real subjection. I have already observed that it left it as it had been with respect to the dependent annexation of the Executive Authority of this country upon the Executive Authority of Great Britain, and thus secured to a foreign Legislature a kind of property in the third estate of our own; giving them a dominion over our allegiance uncontrollable by our Constitution, and enabling them to transfer it according to their will and pleasure. This will not be considered as any very striking proof of national independence, and surely furnishes to the Separatists an unpalatable topic for national degradation. The dependence on taxation of the Executive of this country upon the Executive of Great Britain, was intended to secure the connexion between the two countries. It was obvious, however, that this alone would not be sufficient, and that distinct independent legislatures, held together

gether merely by the tie of a common, though on the part of one country a dependent executive authority, would soon disagree in such a way as to lead necessarily to separation. It was therefore enacted, that no bill should receive the Royal Assent here unless returned into this country under the Great Seal of Great Britain, that is, without the sanction of the British Cabinet, for it cannot be supposed that the Lord Chancellor who has that Great Seal, would use it either without or against the approbation of that Cabinet.— Here, then, in the exercise of the most essential prerogative of the Crown of Ireland in the completion of legislative will, in which every thing dear to the rights and interests of this country may be involved, we are at the policy of six or seven individuals to us foreign, and irresponsible, even the inaction of this Cabinet is sufficient to controul the joint will of our two Houses of Parliament, they stand between us and the Throne, impervious and irremovable, and may extinguish our laws in all the silence of an inquisition; but this Cabinet is not merely irresponsible to us, but it is irresponsible to the Parliament of Great Britain. Through the medium then of this irresponsibility we are in fact, according to our present Constitution, subject in our legislative functions to the controul of the British Parliament, and we have thus provided by the settlement of 1782, for the dependence of our executive, and the controul of our legislative authorities, and we have placed this dependence upon, and lodged this controul with the legislature of another country. The consequence therefore is, that with respect to the prerogative of the Crown and the Administration of the Government of this country, our Parliament is without that efficient controul which is the pride and boast of the British Constitution. Another consequence of the nature of our connexion with Great Britain, which this settlement of 1782 left precisely as it found it, is that we are without any *rightful* participation in the extended possessions of the empire. Were the dominion of the British empire to reach over half the habitable globe, the authority of this country is bounded for ever by the shores with which she is surrounded. Confined to the business of taxation and mere municipal regulation, we are without a voice or a name in the first theatre of the world: our trade to all the possessions of Great Britain is held by curtesy, or if you will, by treaty, instead of being a rightful inheritance, unalienable from us or our posterity, is enjoyed in a great degree upon the terms of an implicit submission of our legislative will to the regulations made and to be made by the Parliament of another kingdom, and is liable to be lost or impeded upon any the slightest difference which may arise with that legislature, whose curtesy, or whose faith forms our only security for its enjoyment. Let us add to all those things an almost utter and necessary preclusion from any interference in imperial concerns; no voice, I mean no effective voice in the great questions of peace or war, alliances or treaties; no possible means of calling the individuals to account who may in these momentous particulars corruptly or improvidently shake our dearest interests to the foundation ascertained and provided for by the settlement

settlement of 1782. But it is said that because England would have five hundred representatives in the United Legislature, and we would have but one hundred, our necessary subjection to the will and pleasure of England would necessarily follow from this disparity of representation.

There never was an objection so apparently true, and so radically false as this: that it should be insisted on by unthinking men, and taken up by factious men, does not surprise me, but that it should make an impression upon the thinking and the wise, would indeed be matter of astonishment. This objection is not founded upon any allegation that the number of representatives to be sent from this country are not in due proportion of her population and wealth, because let the number of our representatives grounded on these relations be what they may, they must ever be in a great proportion inferior in number to the representatives of Great Britain. The objection therefore being founded on the mere inferiority in point of number of Irish representatives, can never be got over but by establishing an exact equality as to numbers in the representation of each kingdom: it follows therefore from this, as was sensibly observed in the House of Commons of Great Britain, that there never would be a fair incorporate Union between two countries which were not mathematically equal in wealth, population and territory; but as two countries so circumstanced never yet existed, nor ever will exist in the world, it follows that no fair incorporate Union ever can or ever would have taken place between any two countries whatever; for if they are not equal in the respects I have mentioned, the representation must be unequal, and then the country whose representation is inferior, must be, according to the hypothesis, in a state of subjection which would be unfair. Now Sir, it is true good sense and reason, as well as logic, that whatever argument leads necessarily to absurdity must be founded in falsehood. But, Sir, what gives rise to this fallacy is, another position equally fallacious—it is said, that after an Union when any question arises between the two countries, the English representatives will outvote the Irish. This is stated as if it were a matter of course that questions should arise between the two countries after an Union; this is very well calculated to impose upon uninformed and unthinking men, and therefore I do not wonder that it has been resorted to with so much pertinacity. Now what is the truth?—After an Union all constitutional questions must be at an end between the two countries for ever: this fruitful source of division will be thereby for ever annihilated, and this country may then hope to enjoy what yet she has never been able to do “a modest security and a long repose:” The laws by which the two countries will be governed after an Union, must be perfectly similar, unless in cases where a dissimilarity is provided for by the articles of Union; it is obvious therefore, that it is only the construction of the terms of the Union upon which any question can arise between the two countries; for it will be contended that whether we will be governed by the same laws

laws with the rest of the empire in all cases where dissimilarity is not expressly provided for by the articles of Union, can ever be considered as furnishing a question of dispute between the two countries; it follows then that it is only upon the articles themselves that any dispute can arise which can be called a question between this country and Great Britain. Now all such questions must of necessity be questions of constitution merely, if the circumstances of the two countries admitted of such an incorporate Union, as has taken place between England and Wales, no question could ever arise between them. Now, Sir, the Union at present proposed differs from that only in this, that the peculiar circumstances of the two countries now intended to be united, require some stipulated arrangements adapted to and flowing from the nature of those peculiar circumstances. Once those arrangements are agreed upon, no difference can arise, save as to what was mutually understood to have been intended between the parties. This is obvious from what took place with respect to Scotland: there the dissimilarities between the two countries were much more numerous than in the present instance; the laws, usages, jurisdictions and religions were all different, and required to be secured by corresponding articles. In the course of almost a century what questions have ever arisen between England and Scotland? Why, Sir, they have been two: one with respect to the malt-tax, and the other with respect to the peerage; and the decision in both these matters is now admitted by common consent, to have been strictly conformable to the articles. It had been his intention to take a much wider view of the subject as it related to the Constitution, and also to have made some observations on the speech of the hon. member opposite to him (Mr. Ponsonby), but the lateness of the hour and the fatigue of the Committee induced him to trouble them no longer at that time.

Mr. OGLE.—Sir, since I have had the honour of a seat in this House, I never trespassed on the indulgence of the chair at such an hour as the present; nor would I now, Sir, but for some things that have been said on the question. I shall certainly, Sir, vote for your leaving the Chair, because if a majority of this House shall agree to that motion, an end will be put to the question *in toto*. I will never give my vote in this House to a measure which would shake the stability of the British empire, degrade Ireland, and reduce this flourishing metropolis to ruin. It is advanced, that our Constitution is defective—but what, Sir, is the remedy proposed?—It is to surrender it irrevocably into the hands of the British Minister. I have heard the religious dissensions of this country made a plea for acceding to an Union. Sir, it is a subject which I can never hear introduced into this House without sorrow, nor speak to without reluctance. My sentiments are now what they ever have been on the Catholic question—they stand unchanged. I am not their religious enemy, I would give them every extent of civil right, but I will never consent to give them political power. My idea of the Constitution of 82 is a Protestant King, Protestant Lords, and a

Protestant House of Commons, all founded on the principles of the revolution. It has been my lot, Sir, to support *Protestant Ascendancy* through all its difficulties and embarrassments—I will continue to do so as long as I have life, and my sentiment is, that it is impossible any connexion between the two countries can remain, which is not founded on that principle. The noble Lord, in a speech of his, early on this subject, did say that *much was to be done for the Catholics*. I cannot mistake the words, Sir, for they made a deep impression on my mind, and from the moment in which they were uttered, confirmed me as the decided enemy of the measure. The noble Lord has said that the measure of Union has been opposed by every rebel in the country, I must beg, Sir, to deny the assertion, and to correct the noble Lord's memory. His Lordship knows that the rebel Popish bishops and priests, and the hords of Popish savages and barbarians of the county of Wexford have not opposed the Union. The noble Lord knows that they have not—for they have petitioned government in favour of the measure, and their petition has been most graciously received.

Doctor BROWN, said, that he persisted in his opinion to go through the considerations of all the propositions, though, until they came out of the mill, and it was seen how they might be modified by parliament, it was impossible for any man to say whether he would ultimately approve the mass; but, in this his mind was now settled, that under the existing circumstances, Union, if upon good terms, was desirable as a refuge from ruin, and therefore, he must wish and hope that the terms should come out such as might be advantageous and acceptable to the nation. He never had disguised the great foundation of his opinion, however unpolite or unpalatable it might be; it rested on long observation of the state of the country and of the state of Parliament; and particularly what happened in the last session.

I have, (continued he,) ever since I sat in this House condemned the system of Parliament; I said it must end in its extinction. I did, when the rebellion broke out, though I abhorred and shuddered at the atrocities of the rebels, think that many things were done in and after its suppression, more founded in resentment and rage than in cool and sound policy; but even supposing those severities necessary, I do not wish to see them repeated; it may be necessary to cut off an arm or a leg, but I do not wish to see the operation; and these two abuses, the corruption of Parliament, and the scenes of the rebellion, have given to my mind this bias to an Union.

When the present chief governor came over, and wished to appease those evils. I naturally approved his measures, and I became warmly attached to his person; his candour, his goodness, and his wisdom, attached me, and no other motive. I did then think that Union was necessary, and I said so to many respectable persons who well remember it: when the measure actually came on I thought the nation was taken unawares, and had not proper time; I had

I had doubts of the competency of Parliament; I felt a temporary hope that experience would teach us the absolute necessity of altering the system of Parliament, and departing from the system of violence, if we wished to preserve the Parliament, and perhaps false complaisance to a portion of my constituents, had some effect in counteracting my real opinion; the Parliament instantly afterwards returned to its old systems; violence and bills of violence were redoubled with multiplying force; most of the opponents of Union were as ready to agree in them as any other men; an absolute military government was established, under which we still live, though happily so administered that we do not feel it; every thing returned to its former state, and I returned to my former opinion; in so doing, I do not think I have been inconsistent; I do not differ from other gentlemen who have condemned the systems of Parliament—we differ only in inference: they think it will be better, I am convinced it never will, and therefore act accordingly.

But as to the greater part of the gentlemen who oppose the Union, hear what their language is; we are in opposition only on this one measure; we do not oppose it to save the people from taxation; no, there is no quantity of taxation and contribution which they are not willing to give: Is it to save the people from power? No: there is no power which they are not willing to part with, even the whole power of the parliament, and all its control to the executive. Is it to save the people from the scourge? No; they are ready and will re-enact all the laws of the last session in the present: ask for a window tax, calculate it at what you please, let it produce five times as much, we have no objection; ask for unlimited powers, you need not ask for them, we would force them on you; do you complain of the Parliament having the power of war and peace? we engage never to exert it; do you complain of its having power to appoint a regent? we will disclaim it; all the properties of a free and independent parliament we will give up, but leave us the name: Are these arguments to be addressed to the people of Ireland? What doth it all come to? "Leave to us our power and individual importance, let us recur to the old colonial method of governing or rather grinding the country, and we do not care what you do," When I saw, and when I heard these things, is it wonderful that I did not find myself much attached to an opposition to Union upon such principles; no men have been more effective in bringing us to the necessity of Union by mistaken and severe modes of government than these very gentlemen.

It has been said, that I pass a libel on the Parliament; I do not mean to do so, if I did, this should not be the place; I am not ambitious of being sent to prison, or of kneeling at your bar; but every one must laugh at the encomiums passed on the Parliament out of doors, by those who for twenty years, have been representing it as the great nuisance and grievance of the nation, and who now speak of it as the paragon of virtue, and the quintessence

cence of excellence, as the paradise of disinterestedness; I know not what epithet of hyberbole they would not bestow upon it—"Timeo Danaos;" give me leave to suspect these praises, they want the Parliament, not because they love it, but as a theatre for future machinations and dangerous designs.

But it is said, is the English parliament better? I believe it is infinitely, but if it were not, what would that argument go to? It might go to the extinction of parliament altogether. I cannot help it, said the good Bishop Butler, when arguing for the immortality of the soul, he was told, why this will prove dogs and horses to be immortal; I cannot help it, if the argument be a good one, it must remain so; I say, if I were writing an Utopia, I would say, if ever the time came that parliament served as a stalking horse, under which to shoot the arrows of the executive; as a name under which the executive might do what it would not dare do without its influenced sanction, or, as a circus, in which to combat for the destruction of the constitution; I should think the existence of that parliament of little consequence; this is not the case of the English parliament; I do not presume to say that it is of any other.

But would the English united parliament be kinder to this country? No man seems to dare to answer this question; I will answer it; I believe in my heart and soul it would; the reason is plain, because it would not be actuated by those passions, those resentments, that thirst for revenge, that rooted memory of injuries which exists here. We have heard it this night lamented, that persons who are said to have been in rebellion, were suffered to open their mouths, we hear it every day in conversation lamented, that they are suffered to exist; What, was there to be no amnesty, no pardon, no oblivion, no termination to these distractions? Yet, this is natural, it is incident to human nature; and, therefore, I say, men at a distance, more cool, less impassioned, will think more kindly of the gross of the inhabitants of this country, and, I do assert, that in all my intercourse with the English, I have found them more reasonable, more compassionate, more kindly disposed to the people and peasantry of this country, than are its gentry.

England is perpetually spoken of as a foreign nay as a hostile country; Does this lead to peace? Is it wise? Is it true? The policy of England to us was false for 600 years; It was, but has she not for a long time past acknowledged her error, retracted her claims and altered her system? And what is the wisdom of perpetually reminding a sincere friend of old bickerings and ancient errors; in commercial countries there may be some jealousy of England, let this be well watched in the articles of Union, but in all other respects I cannot conceive why England should possibly entertain any sentiments hostile to us, and every man conversant in England knows the contrary to be the fact.

But of all the charges against England the most audacious as most false is in my opinion that of her causing or fomenting the disturbances

disturbances and distractions of this country; let any man lay his hand upon his heart and say that he really believes this. Good heaven! Sir, have we occasion to look abroad for the causes of our dissensions? Do we not know and see every moment the bitter animosities of catholic to protestant and protestant to catholic, of ancient inhabitants to modern settlers, of old claimants to new possessors, of tenants who think themselves oppressed and landlords who complain of murder and massacre, of rebels to loyalists, and loyalists to rebels; What has England to say to all this? Did England create catholics? Did England create orange-men? Did England create men's hearts or their passions? No: England is endeavouring to do all she can to allay and prevent these distractions, and it is the passions, the prejudices and the fury of the parliament, the gentry and the people of Ireland, which stand in her way.

See how just is this accusation; she sends over a chief governor here on purpose to cool and moderate and quiet and allay those furious animosities, and for that very reason a party is made against him by the very men who complain of England's fomenting our disorders; had that great man yielded to the violence of such advisers perhaps he would not have found so many opposers to an Union.

Foolish and deluded people I cannot help exclaiming; I know your spirit, but surely a more versatile people never were sent upon the face of the earth; you seem in love with oppression, and when a power comes here which endeavours to extricate you from it, you long to return to those scourgings and whippings and burnings which first disgusted me into the support of Union, and like a Russian wife seem to like those best who beat you most, and surely you will find them amongst its opponents.

I think therefore in favouring an Union I am a friend to the people; but if they are of a contrary opinion—if they wish, as the King of Prussia said of the people of Neuchatel, to be damned to all eternity, I cannot help it; and I should be sorry that they were forced or made by violence even to be happy; but let me first hear the voice of the nation; I hear the voice of violence, I hear the voice of party, I hear the voice of lawyers bawling because their mart will be gone, and of politicians because their personal importance will be lessened, but I cannot hear the cool, sober voice of the nation at large.

I must next advert to the inflammatory language heard here; men admit the competency of parliament and yet say they will not obey it; they say parliament is wise and good, and yet the next moment they will not obey it, but, say they, it is influenced and packed; this is not very consistent, but if this be so it ought to be reformed or extinguished; say they it is not free, there are different modes of affecting its freedom, it may be influenced by government or intimidated by mob, seats may be filled by administration or bought up by the purse of a party; a man's freedom is not a little affected, if following his own sentiments is

to be followed by calumniating his character or knocking him on the head. And here give me leave to say, that these vile calumnies, the monitrous abuse, the lying slanders, cast upon every man who is friendly to an Union, is one reason which gives me a strong bias to it; that cause is not good which requires such supports.

Another thing which has been truly observed gives me a strong bias to an Union; it is that however loyal men disagree upon the subject, the disaffected have no difference; it was said they would be delighted with the measure as leading to separation; I have not found it; on the contrary, they are outrageous against it; must not I think that measure a guard against separation, which the friends of separation so vehemently detest.

As to the propositions of Union themselves in detail, there are some things which I dislike, and many which I would wish to see modified; I wish the Peers were to be elected, I wish the boroughs were not to be bought, or if it must be, so, that it had been a private transaction, and I even think it would have been wise in England to have done it with their own money, not to give pretext for discontent at the burthen in this country. I have some doubts whether our quota or proportion of taxation of two seventeenths may not be too much, and I am extremely anxious that something very considerable indeed should be done for the city of Dublin, I wish the city would point out itself what it thinks most for its own advantage, and I think the Parliament should be most liberal and go great lengths indeed in making compensation to it if it is likely to suffer.

I have the honour of being descended from a long series of clergymen of the Church of England, and must naturally be attached to it, but I do not see what mischief could ensue, if after an Union the Catholics were put on the same footing with any other Dissenters from the established church; at present, if admitted into Parliament, they might acquire too much weight in this disolated kingdom, and danger might ensue, but then they would have exactly the proportionable weight in the whole empire which they ought to have, neither more nor less; they would have no pretext for complaint, but be on a footing with all other his Majesty's subjects; Why then is not this done? I verily believe because an Irish Parliament would not suffer it; in the united one it is open to be done, no, says one hon. gentleman, this excludes the Catholics for ever; no, says another, my objection is that this doth not exclude them for ever. These are contrary objections, but I think the latter assertion is evidently true, and therefore I hope and think that the United Parliament will do that with safety which the Irish Parliament always has refused to do as dangerous.

And now, Sir, with all these objections, give me leave to ask, if Union be rejected, what system is to be pursued? I may object to part of the proposals, but I must wish on the whole that they should be acceptable, because otherwise what follows? Says an honourable friend of mine, an Union must be followed by a completely military government; I hope not. But what will the rejection of Union be followed by? An infinitely more military government, sought for and

and approved by most of those men who oppose the Union, by the re-enaction and continuation of all the severe laws of former years, by all the ancient severity, by the old colonial system, probably by a revival of all the horror and distraction which we have not long since escaped.

As I hear it is, though not in the degree which wild imagination represents, I own the apprehension, least I should by my vote injure one tradesman or his family in the city of Dublin, affects my mind more than all the declamations which could be made for years about the free and independent Parliament, which I never saw and never shall see, and about the pride of the nation opposed to its felicity; But are not the poor of Dublin as wretched now as they can be? I know much about them, I have felt much for them, and, according to my ability, have endeavoured to shew it. Can an Union make them worse? I hope not; I hope it may bring in that capital and those manufactures which are wanted to make their condition better; at all events, how can they be worse off than now without an Union? We may talk of Union, but the ladies of Dublin might, adopting a single fashion, by not flying to foreign manufactures, by wearing the really beautiful dresses of their own country, do more for the poor of Dublin in a year, than an Union could effect against them in ten; there is one of our misfortunes, it is absolutely wicked, and I never see the present dresses of the female sex without melancholy and sorrow.

One word more as to the Catholics; I am a sincere Protestant, not like many, a merely political but a religious Protestant, with opinions founded on reason, study, and reflection; but I wish that every privilege should be granted to the Catholics, consistent with the safety of the establishment, for to the establishment also on much reflection I am a steady friend.

Every body says we cannot go on as we have done, yet no new plan is proposed by the opposers of Union; in fact they never could agree upon one; the major part are of opinion that Union is necessary, that if they had been let alone they would have kept down the country with a strong hand, as had been done for one hundred years past, and that nothing was wanting but not to have stopped them in the career of whipping, scourging, shooting, burning, and refusal of all amnesty, to bring matters to their old footing; and, therefore, will wish to return to their old measures; the rest will be for redress of grievances, and the old question of Catholic emancipation will instantly be revived; in truth, I think it follows inevitably, that we must incorporate with the Catholics, to give them a liberty of getting into Parliament, while the boroughs continue as they are, would be trifling and mockery, they therefore must wish for reform. Thus all the old questions will be revived, all the old distractions, and after three, or four, or six years of misery, the whole property of the nation, or at least the Protestant part of it, will recur back to Union as the only resource.

Such is the picture which I form to myself of future events in case this measure be rejected; and, under these impressions, as I have said,

said, though I may disapprove of parts of the detail, I must necessarily wish that the whole may be so modified, as to meet the wishes of the nation, and pass into stability.

Mr. GOULD.—“ Sir, I cannot patiently listen to this fantastic crusade, this war of pert ribaldry—(Here Mr. G. was called to order)—He resumed—Sir, I repeat, that I cannot listen to an hospitably received foreigner waging his fantastic crusade of words against the liberties of Ireland. I will not allow the fitness of the Irish People to bear oppression; it is not true! The hon. gentleman says he knows nothing of the opinion of the Irish People, he ought not to be ignorant of them; the petitions on that table ought to instruct him, but he knows that he can despise the sense of his constituents, he knows he can despise their instructions—If the hon. gentleman cannot hold his place in this House consistent with his private sentiments, let him resign it. (Mr. G. was here again called to order.) He continued, that he conceived himself perfectly in order by adverting to the sentiments of any portion of the constituent body, and expressing what should be the conduct of a representative instructed of those sentiments. He was an eye-witness when the hon. gentleman entered into the most solemn engagement. (Here the cry of order was again repeated.)

Col. BARRY said, that his hon. friend was in order, and ought not to be controuled in any thing relating to the subject of Union.

Dr. DUIGENAN was amazed at what had fallen from the hon. gentleman who spoke last. He denied that the Representative was bound by the instructions of the Constituent—such doctrine was setting up a democracy in that House.

Col. BARRY—The subject which the Learned Doctor had entered into was not at issue between them, and he could only account for the hon. and learned gentleman's irrelevant observation, by supposing that he had but just awoke out of sleep.

Mr. GOULD—“ Sir I have been repeatedly called to order, but more symptoms of irascibility have been manifested by those who affected to correct me, than I am sure I have betrayed. Sir, in support of my opinion that the representative should obey the instructions of his constituents, I can quote the authority of one of the greatest statesmen England ever knew, who expressly said that “*the wishes of the People ought to be as a law to the House of Commons.*”

Mr. MARTIN—I call the hon. gentleman to order.

Mr. GOULD—Sir, the hon. gentleman who has called me to order, has travelled so much, and informed himself so well of the laws of decorum, that I must yield to his knowledge of *etiquette*.

Mr. MARTIN (emphatically)—And of *honour*.

Mr. GOULD—What I advanced I will repeat; whomsoever the cap fits let him wear it; and I am as ready to lay down my life in defence of the Constitution, I will not shrink from a constitutional doctrine.---

Mr. MARTIN again called to order.

Mr.

Mr. GOULD—I will proceed undismayed and unintimidated by any man or set of men, when the rights of the People are at issue; and I do say, that he who derelicts from a solemn test, not only violates the duty of a Representative, but also the laws which are obligatory on a man of honour.—

Mr. ATTORNEY GENERAL hoped there would be more moderate language; the event which had taken place in the morning called for it.

Mr. BROWNE appealed to the House, if he had not studiously avoided all species of personalty; besides that he trusted that such a conduct was foreign to the natural bent of his mind, he felt himself delicately circumstanced with respect to the consequences which might result without the walls of that House. He denied that he had ever subscribed to any test, or had pledged himself to his constituents as to any line of parliamentary conduct. At the time of his election the idea of an Union was considered ridiculous; but even so he would not suffer his freedom of opinion and judgment to be fettered. To establish this he read a letter from Counsellor French of Kildare-street,* who had been professionally engaged in the election. He acknowledged that a numerical majority of his constituents were adverse to an Union, but he averred that the most important portion, and those the most deeply interested, the governing members were all, except one, decided friends to the measure. As to the personalty against him, which an hon. gentleman was pleased to indulge in, he would pass it by with the same indifference that he would the babbling of a parrot.

* “ *Having had the honour and happiness of being acquainted with the late most respectable Provost, Doctor Murray, he applied to me to be his Assistant Counsel at the late election for members for the University, which I declined, as I thought it would be inconsistent with the line in my profession which I had adopted, of doing business only in my chambers. However, my esteem for Doctor Murray was such, that I thought it my duty to meet and consult with the gentlemen appointed by him as assistant counsel. These motives excited in me a curiosity to attend the general election in the College, and on that occasion I observed that the candidates were repeatedly and warmly pressed by some of the electors to give an explicit declaration against an Union of this country with Great Britain. Though I cannot recollect the particular expressions of the gentlemen making such requisition, or of the answers of Dr. Browne, on that occasion; yet, I am clear in my opinion that he did not bind himself by any engagement either for or against such a measure, and that he declared himself clearly that he would not engage himself, as possibly circumstances would oblige him, consistent with his duty, to support the measure, though at that time he did not see the probability of such circumstances occurring. This is the conclusion I have drawn from what occurred in my hearing at the election; and I believe I am not mistaken in this conclusion, for the sentiments expressed on that occasion by Dr. Brown made an impression on me, and appeared to me then, as they do now, to be such as a wise, conscientious, and honest Representative should adopt.*

“ ROBERT FRENCH.”

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The SPEAKER said he would vote against the principle, without putting the House to the necessity of a second division.

On the question for agreeing in the first proposition, namely, the principle of Legislative Union—

Mr. O'DONEL rose, and said, Sir, I cannot allow you to put the question on this important subject, of a magnitude superior to any ever debated within the walls of this House, without expressing my most decided disapprobation; and poor indeed should I appear to myself, and contemptible to my country, if I could content myself with giving a silent vote. It was my intention not to have troubled this Committee, but when I see and hear a question put by you, Sir, and listened to by this Committee, whether we should for ever extinguish the legislative right of our country, I cannot, as a REAL IRISHMAN, sit silent—(a loud laugh from the Treasury Bench.)

Is this decency?—is this order?—is this insignificant and impertinent laugh to encourage deliberation?—I see a set of men who often cry order and practice disorder; who talk of decorum, without knowing how to practice it; who having sold the liberties of *their* country endeavour to stifle *my* voice and deter me from delivering my sentiments in defence of my country; but let me tell that side, that were their numbers double, and fortified with arms as they have been strengthened by corruption, they have not collectively or individually the power to silence *me*, or prevent me from declaring my utmost detestation at a measure, formed by the English Minister, and nearly carried into effect by his *Irish* creatures, to rob the PEOPLE of their RIGHTS.

Mr. Annesley, perhaps I may never have again the opportunity of raising my feeble voice in this House, to support my country—O my country! I boast in the recollection that *my* ancestors were coeval even with that constitution which is about to be destroyed, and while I see Englishmen acting as emissaries in the ranks of the Parliament of Ireland to destroy *its* constitution, and thereby think they perform *their* duty to *their* country, let *me* be allowed to make an attempt in favour of *mine*.

I see the honourable gentlemen laugh, but they should rather weep; this night's sad vote will involve them with the destruction of their country; it is a serious, a melancholy, a dangerous moment; we appear cool, as if this was a question merely between 161 at that and 116 at this side of the House, as if the people were not concerned, as if they took no part; No, no; there is no such thing—the people have discussed it--the people are discussing it--the people will discuss it --and THE PEOPLE WILL OPPOSE IT, even if you shall be wicked and foolish enough to agree to it. I think I see the indignant Britons holding out the finger of scorn, and pointing them out as the reprobate betrayers of their country--I think I see them refuse to associate with the base trustees, who converted every thing to profit by the loss of honor, respectability and character. Gracious God, Mr. Annesley, do you know the question you have now read to the Committee for our consent? you know it not, else you could not have read it with such coolness--

D. es

Does this Committee know its object? that is impossible; else you, Sir, might have fallen a just victim to its indignation. I will tell it you--it is that we shall consent *for ever to surrender* the rights of Ireland and of Irishmen. The noble Lord may stand up in the floor to interrupt me, let me entreat him while we yet have a House of Commons left us and a privilege of speech, to act with *decency*, if not, Sir, I must insist you, as Chairman, to enforce it from the triumphant youth.

The noble Lord, however he and I may differ in opinion and conduct, knows that I am speaking as an Irishman, the honest indignation of a true and sincere heart, at this treacherous and base attack, and the infamous means which have been used to form the majority on which he seems to plume himself—a majority, and I say it with pleasure, *too weak, too insignificant, and too paltry* ever to carry into effect this ruinous and disgraceful measure; the noble Lord also knows that I am speaking the honest dictates of my heart—FOR HE FOUND ME PROOF AGAINST ALL HIS CORRUPTION.

I have opposed the Union through every stage; I shall continue to do so. One principle alone actuated and directed my conduct—the love of my country—the certainty that neither I or this House have a right or a *power* to vote away the property and privileges of Irishmen. Let the Minister of both countries look to it: let those who have sold *their* birth-rights for a pot of porridge look to it: if they persevere, the consequences will be dreadful—on their heads be it: for my part, in the presence of this House, in the hearing of my country; and in the awful presence of my God, who yet I trust with his omnipotent arm will avert this dreadful punishment—I *wash my hands out of all concern* with the waste of blood which must follow from the further continuance of this destructive proposal. I have spoke as an Irishman—I have acted as such—and in the hour of danger, no monarch shall command my services in opposition to that claim which every Irishman is subject to—when his country is in danger.

For the question	115
Against it	161---Majority 46

F I N I S.

